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# Health & Fitness

September 2015 // £3.80

## WALK SLIM TODAY

Burn fat and get  
super-fit in 12 weeks!

### Should you go gluten free?

The truth about  
elimination diets

### SUPERFOOD SWAPS THAT SAVE YOU £££s

Can't afford goji & açai? Try  
these everyday food heroes!

ESCAPE THE GYM!

# 21

BEST WAYS  
TO WORK OUT  
OUTDOORS THIS  
SUMMER

Look  
younger  
in 1 easy  
move!

p107

DIET TEST

PALEO OR  
VEGAN –

Which is best  
for fitness?

STUCK  
IN A GYM  
RUT?

{ Use this 10-min  
boredom buster! }

LEAN  
LEGS  
NOW!

Lower-body  
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Photographer: Ian Derry  
 Stylist: Kellie Daggett  
 Model: Antonella @ Leni's  
 Hair & Make-up:  
 Alice Theobald @ Joy  
 Goodman using Ark  
 skincare & Benefit  
 cosmetics. **Clothing:** Core  
 Performance Cross Back  
 Sports Bra & Nordica  
 Leggings; both from  
 lucashugh.com

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**DIET TEST PALEO OR VEGAN –**  
 Which is best for fitness?

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 { Use this 10-min boredom buster! }

**LEAN LEGS NOW!**  
 Lower-body toners that really work

**PLUS: HEALTHY BAKING RECIPES / HIGH-INTENSITY YOGA TIPS**

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## This month's cover model

We asked Antonella how she keeps toned and trim.

'I practise a lot of Pilates and ballet barre,' she says. 'I find it more toning than running – it gives me more shape and lengthens my body. But I also love conditioning work because it's fun, upbeat and fast.'

**SUBS!**  
 Subscribe to *H&F* this month and receive three issues of the printed and digital magazines for just £3. See page 48 for more details.

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TV presenter and sports journalist Charlie Webster.



# Welcome



**P**aleo, alkaline, gluten-free, dairy-free – these days, nearly everyone seems to be on a healthy eating regimen. But just how good are these diets if you love to exercise? Can you cut out foods and still have the energy to perform at your best? We asked a super-fit H&F writer to test drive three popular diets – paleo, vegan and calorie counting – for three months, to see how they affected her fitness. Which plan helped her perform – and which left her running on empty? Find out in ‘The Fit Woman’s Diet Experiment’ (page 54).

One of fastest-growing diets is ‘free-from’. At least 15 per cent of UK households now avoid gluten and wheat – half of them because they believe it’s healthier. But is that really the case? Are we giving up our favourite foods for no reason, and even compromising our health in the process? We decided it was time to investigate and, in ‘Should You Go Without?’ (page 50), deliver the verdict. Make sure you read it before you even think about buying that gluten-free brownie!

And if you’re reluctant to part with half your salary to buy the latest, fashionable superfoods, turn to ‘Superfood Swaps’ (page 26) to discover the everyday ingredients that offer an equally powerful punch.

Have a happy, healthy month!

Mary

Mary Comber, Editor

## What the H&F team has been up to this month...



### Art director

Lucy takes on the mountains at Les Deux Alpes



### Features writer

Becky walks from Kaliviani, Crete, to the island's famous Balos lagoon



### Chief sub

Emma has a Pilates session with gymnast Lynne Robinson at the 9Bar relaunch (9bar.com)



Our fashion model Kim on location at London's Clapham Common

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Recreate Candice's transformation: False Lash Effect Mascara in black, Colour Elixir Lipstick in Ruby Tuesday, Facefinity All Day Flawless Foundation and Glossfinity Nail Polish in Red Passion

THE MAKE-UP OF MAKE-UP ARTISTS





# About YOU

Exercising for your age, beating workout fear and healthy living

## METABOLISM BOOSTER

I'm turning 30 later this year, and your article 'Outsmart Your Metabolism' (August issue) really struck a chord. Having run for a number of years, I've noticed that the weight is no longer dropping off as it once did.

I've started taking an active approach, by beginning every day with a homemade smoothie full of spinach and Greek yoghurt, which makes me feel fuller for longer. I'm also incorporating more interval training into my weekly routine, along with upping my water intake, and now I'm seeing my weight start to drop. I'd never appreciated how your metabolism changes so much as you get older – thank you *H&F* for flagging this up!

**Jessica Williams,**  
Stockton-On-Tees



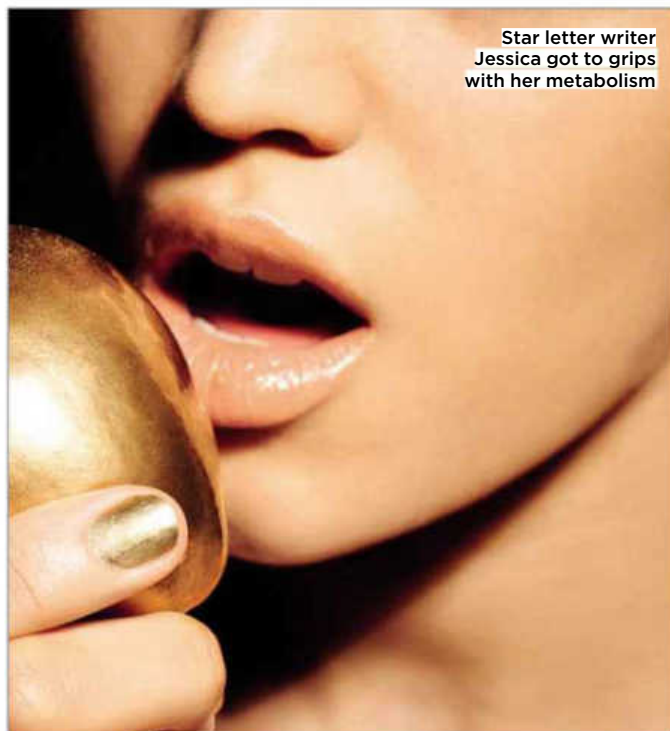
## RECLAIMING CONFIDENCE

I was recently diagnosed with benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV) [a condition where the position of your head gives the sudden sensation that you are spinning, or your head is spinning].

Immediately my love for the gym and exercise turned into fear, due to feeling dizzy – and even panicking about being dizzy before the dizziness starts! So I turned a negative into a positive and subscribed to *Health & Fitness*.

I love the Workout Handbook section, and feel I've gained confidence in exercising again, knowing I'll be okay! Your advice, guidance and amazing success stories have enabled me to love exercise again!

**Anthea Grant, Leicester**



Star letter writer  
Jessica got to grips  
with her metabolism

## Outsmart your METABOLISM!

Reversing your metabolic clock could be the secret to boosting weight loss and warding off wrinkles. Tick, tock, tick tock...

WORDS: Louise Pyne

## GOOD GUIDANCE

I'm new to your magazine and decided to subscribe after reading an issue. I'm no fitness guru, simply a 54-year-old grandmother who wants to lead a healthy and fit life. The advice your magazine gives is great – everything is manageable and achievable. I look forward to each issue!

**Frances McShane, via email**



How do  
you stay  
energised?

'Cut down on alcohol intake. It's a depressant which slows down how we think, move and react!'

**@DrinkWiseWales**

'Ten minutes of meditation to clear and refresh mentally, a Green Goddess smoothie and five minutes of mard hula hooping – to get everything fired up!'

**@MsJacquiMac**

'A hot yoga session. I try to do a 7am class to set me up for the day ahead.'

**Sam Lott**

'#greentea works for me! And a high #protein breakfast.'

**@Lauren\_LA**



## WRITE IN AND WIN!

This month, Jessica wins a complete runner's outfit, worth £189, courtesy of Karrimor. The prize includes a pair of D30 Stability trainers with D30 cushioning; a Calorie Life Coach Watch with built-in 24/7 calorie measurement, distance travelled, step counter and heart rate monitor; and Bluetooth wireless earphones to listen to music, and make and receive calls! Karrimor is also giving away a pair of XLite Capri Running Tights and an XLite Tee. Visit [karrimor.com](http://karrimor.com) to get the look.

## TALK TO US!

We love hearing from you. **Email** [letters@iris-uk.com](mailto:letters@iris-uk.com), **Facebook** [facebook.com/HandFmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/HandFmagazine), **Twitter** @HandFmagazine, **Instagram** [Healthandfitness\\_mag](https://www.instagram.com/Healthandfitness_mag), **Write to H&F magazine**, Iris Publishing, 10th Floor, Marble Arch Tower, 55 Bryanston St, London W1H 7AJ



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# FIT BUZZ

Your guide to the hottest things to do, see and buy this month

## 1 DRESS FOR COMBAT

Enjoy letting off your fitness steam with martial arts? You've now got the outfit covered. UFC and Reebok have teamed up to produce the first-ever UFC Fight Kit, which features combat-specific innovations

that support strength, speed and flexibility. Reebok has also launched its own Combat Collection for those who want to train like a fighter. The ranges are now available at [ufcstore.com](http://ufcstore.com) and [reebok.co.uk](http://reebok.co.uk).



WORDS: Becky Fletcher

## 2 SWIM THE CHANNEL

This September sees around 5,000 UK swimmers take part in the Aspire Channel Swim 2015. Don't be put off by the challenge's name – you swim the distance of the English Channel (22 miles) in a maximum of 12 weeks as an individual or a team in your local pool to raise money for spinal cord injury charity Aspire. Fancy getting involved or making a donation? Visit [aspirechannelswim.co.uk](http://aspirechannelswim.co.uk).



## 3 TRY A LIQUID CHOCCY FIX

Calling chocolate fans! Coconut brand, Jax Coco has just revealed its new Jax Coco Chocolate drink (£1.79 for 330ml; [ocado.com](http://ocado.com)). It combines raw cacao with coconut water, coconut cream and a dash of coconut nectar to make the world's first chocolate-infused 100 per cent pure coconut water. It's delicious, hydrating and guaranteed to satisfy any sweet cravings. Hooray!



## 4

### DARE TO BARE

If you've got glowing summer skin, you don't need lots of make-up. BareMinerals' Blemish Remedy (£26 for 6g;

[bareminerals.co.uk](http://bareminerals.co.uk)) is a super-light, mineral-powdered foundation that diminishes the appearance of imperfections, skin redness and shine. Enriched with aspen bark and tea tree oil for clearer, healthier skin, it's a beauty bag must!



### PROTECT YOUR HAIR

Do you swim a lot or have a last-minute holiday booked? Boost your hair's defences with Philip Kingsley Swimcap (£12 for 75ml; [philipkingsley.co.uk](http://philipkingsley.co.uk)). It conditions hair and protects it from UV rays, the drying and damaging effects of chlorinated and salt water and discoloration from pool water. If that wasn't enough, it also deeply conditions your locks as you wear it. It's one multi-tasking hair hero!



### GET MORE FROM YOUR KIT

Loungewear and underwear brand, About, isn't just about wearable, clean-cut style. Its products are designed to be kind to your skin and are enriched with antibacterial, skin-friendly beeswax, skin-nourishing silk proteins and aloe vera, plus antibacterial silver ions. We love this simple-looking body for yoga or Pilates (£28; [aboutwear.com](http://aboutwear.com)).





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\*Visible flakes seen at 21x with regular use.



When it comes to her hair, **Sofia Vergara** doesn't compromise and neither should you. Get up to **100% flake-free\*** and **model-beautiful hair** with Head & Shoulders Smooth & Silky Shampoo and Conditioner.





# SHAPE *Up*

FITNESS NEWS \* WORKOUT FIXES \* EXPERT ADVICE

## *Keep bendy*

We're living longer than ever before and with that comes the need to take care of our bodies. A new study printed in the *Journal of the Mechanical Behaviour of Biomedical Materials* sheds light on why we sporty types are increasingly prone to injuries and niggles with age. The researchers, knowing that horse tendons are similar to human ones, studied the flexibility of the horses' connective tissue and discovered that it tends to stiffen with age. Sound downbeat? It's not all bad – scientists claim data like this could help find future cures. Giddy Up!





## THE GOLDEN RULE

Fitness pros call the post-exercise hour the 'golden hour' as it's long been considered the best time to consume that post-workout protein shake and boost muscle repair. But according to research in the journal *Nutrition and Metabolism*, it's best to guzzle your protein shake in four sittings. The researchers got exercisers to take a total of 80g of whey protein, starting the first dose immediately after training. Group one took 8 x 10g doses every 90 minutes, group two took 4 x 20g every three hours, group three took 2 x 40g doses every six hours. The four 20g doses produced the greatest tissue-restoring results.



### 3 TOP PROTEINS

These protein products are a source of good-quality fuel for your body

#### **MONKEY NUTRITION PRIMAL26**

(£17.95 for 420g; monkeynutrition.com)  
A great source of branched chain amino acids (BCAAs) with a biological value of 159, this whey protein isolate is fat-free, sugar-free and gluten-free with 26g of protein per serving.

#### **NEAT NUTRITION WHEY PROTEIN**

(£34 for 1kg; neat-nutrition.com)  
This powder is packed full of amino acids and zero additives. Expect 24g of protein per serving for a gluten-free, vegetarian fix.

#### **SIS ADVANCED WHEY ISOLATE**

(£44.99 for 1kg; scienceinsport.com)  
Made from 100 per cent pure whey protein isolate, this low-fat powder contains 31g of protein and 1.7g of carbohydrate in every serving.



### {CELEBRITY} QUOTE

'I sit today in a place of greater acceptance of my body. And that includes not just my weight, but all of the things that come with your changing body.'

Demi Moore

# Fitness NOTEBOOK

News and kit to power your workouts

# 378



PEOPLE SET A GUINNESS WORLD RECORD FOR JUMP SQUATTING\*

### JUMP AROUND!

Need some motivation to work out harder, stronger, longer? The Polar A300 fitness and activity monitor (£94.50; polar.com) keeps tabs on you 24/7, and even buzzes to alert you if you've been sitting down too long! Sync to the Polar Flow app and get competitive with friends. It's addictive!



We Love...

WORDS: Sarah Ivory, Emma Lewis, Ellie George  
PHOTOGRAPHY: Thinkstock  
\*The record was part of a British Military Fitness initiative





# STAY IN SHAPE ALL YEAR

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# HOW FIT IS YOUR TOWN?

From cycle paths to green gyms, where you live could be key to keeping fit. Here's how a healthier home town could mean a happier you!



**T** rue story – where you live can have a profound effect on how fit and healthy you are. That's according to Dr Claude Bouchard, a researcher at the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study (TIAS). Bouchard claims that your exposure to unhealthy foods, a lack of traffic-free roads and poor building design can help determine how fat or fit you are. And further data confirms that the more pedestrian-friendly your town is, the easier it is for you to adopt an active lifestyle. 'Good urban design has fitness benefits because it encourages active transportation and outdoor physical activity,' explains Dr Stephanie Wilkie, an environmental

psychologist at the University of Sunderland. 'It's not just about having the facilities to support activities, such as going for a swim or taking a fitness class. These [healthy] places also provide opportunities for social interactions which build a sense of community.'

It's not a matter of town versus country living – both urban and rural areas have a lot to offer. A 2014 report from the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), for instance, shows that there's a direct correlation between the amount of green space, density of housing and overall health of people in areas. Indeed, it turns out that the least fit adults in the country live in areas that have twice the housing density of the most active areas and a

worrying 20 per cent less green space. It's a scary statistic, so the question is 'could your town be doing more for your wellbeing?' We've uncovered the environmental and social markers of a healthy home town. Here's what to look out for in your area.

## 1 PARKS, GARDENS AND RECREATION GROUNDS

Five minutes of 'green exercise' – that's all you need to feel happier each day. Researchers from the University of Essex discovered that exercising in the presence of nature – whether walking, cycling, gardening, fishing, boating or horse-riding – leads to mental and physical health improvements – so much so that the



academics suggest planners and architects improve access to green spaces. And that's not all – additional data published in the journal *Environmental Science and Technology* shows that living in a greener urban area could lead to long-term healthiness. After analysing 40,000 households, the researchers discovered people's sense of wellbeing was enhanced in these areas. Fortunately, an impressive 85 per cent of us now live near a green area. But according to the data from RIBA, it's the quality as well as the quantity of parks that counts. For example, 40 per cent of people in Birmingham said that they would be more active if parks and green spaces were more attractive. Simple changes, such as better lighting, more bins or benches, improved walkways and heavier vegetation could make parks nicer places to walk, run or play football in.

## 2 BEACHES, RIVERS AND CANALS

It's true that living near the sea, lake or a river could have a positive impact on your wellbeing – arguably, even more so than living near a green space. According to researchers from Exeter University, people responded better to images of urban scenes with water features than those without water in them. And further data shows that the closer you live to the English coast, the healthier you are. What are the benefits? Science shows that the sound of water can lull the brain into a relaxed state, while being immersed in water in a prone position increases blood flow to the cerebral arteries, making us feel more alert and active. Time to hit the beach?

## 3 CYCLE PATHS AND BRIDALWAYS

Do you live near a cycle path or public right of way? Good news – studies show that

people living near cycle paths get around 45 minutes' more exercise every week. Data published in the *American Journal of Public Health* looked at three communities – in Southampton, Warwickshire and Cardiff – before and after Sustrans and the Big Lottery Fund brought free cycle routes to the area. Results show those living 0.6 miles from the new cycle routes did around 45 minutes of extra exercise, whether walking or cycling, each week. Unfortunately, those living up to 2.5 miles away from the routes did not. No route near you? Luckily, the National Cycle Network ([sustrans.org.uk](http://sustrans.org.uk)) is working hard to bring traffic-free, on-road cycling and walking routes to every major UK town and city. Hooray!

## 4 FARMERS' MARKETS, ALLOTMENTS AND GREEN GYMS

Like the idea of eating fresh produce every day? An increasing number of people are becoming 'locavores', meaning they'll only use locally-sourced ingredients such as those from farmers' markets and allotment stalls. Why? Ecological economists argue that locavore communities will be happier and healthier ones, plus they're doing their bit for the environment. Another way to do your bit for the environment (and fitness!) is by signing up for a Green Gym. Green Gyms are outdoor sessions during which instructors guide you in environmental activities, such as planting trees or maintaining woodland habitats. The conservation project not only looks after green spaces, but also ensures that volunteers reap fitness rewards. According to data, nearly a third more calories can be burnt in a Green Gym session than in a standard aerobics class – and there's even a warm-up and cool-down before and after! In urban areas, such as London, the



number of Green Gyms has grown by 500 per cent since 2011. Visit [tvc.org.uk/greengym](http://tvc.org.uk/greengym) to find out more.

## 5 SAFER STREETS, WALKWAYS AND LOW-TRAFFIC ROADS

Love road running or cycling? If your usual route winds through heavy traffic, you could be loading your lungs with harmful air pollutants in the form of cigarette smoke, car exhaust fumes and particles in the atmosphere. The result? The pollution may irritate your airways, reduce your performance and, shockingly, increase your risk of a midriff bulge. Recent data in the journal *Occupational & Environmental Medicine* links road traffic noise to an increased risk of tummy fat. After assessing people living in and around Stockholm since 1999, the researchers discovered that waist size increased by 0.21cm for every additional five decibels (dB) of road traffic noise the participants were exposed to. Experts suggest that high noise levels may cause stress, which increases your production of cortisol. High levels of cortisol have been linked to fat deposits around the tummy. So avoid doing road activities during rush hour or, if you can, plan a route that sticks to green areas. According to the RIBA survey, safe pathways linking key areas of the city with green spaces help keep you fit. Check out [walkit.com](http://walkit.com) to help plan your low-emission walking route. ■

### FIT BRITAIN

What's the fittest place in the UK? Bulk Powders surveyed 17 cities to find out how much exercise is taken across the UK. Does your town measure up?

#### STRONGEST = LONDON

London has the highest number of people performing strength workouts, with 27 per cent of Londoners lifting weights every week. Half the amount flex their muscles in Edinburgh, Brighton and Southampton.

#### LEAST FIT = NOTTINGHAM

Bad news for Nottingham locals – according to data, it's the least active city with 39 per cent exercising less than once a week. Glasgow wasn't far behind with 19 per cent of inhabitants clocking one weekly workout or less.

#### MOST CARDIO = LIVERPOOL

If you're a cardio queen, you'll fit in well in Liverpool. While London had the highest number of people doing strength workouts, Liverpoolians favoured cardio with 34 per cent getting sweaty each week.

#### TEAM PLAYERS = BRIGHTON

Love team sports? So do Brightonians. According to the stats in the survey, people in Brighton are most active in team sports, such as rugby or football – but men are much more likely to be team players than women.



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# FITNESS expert



Want to lose the baby weight and get your pre-pregnancy body back? Let's do it!



**New to motherhood?**  
**Congratulations! Just don't expect to shrink back to your pre-pregnancy shape immediately.**

According to data from parenting website wauwaa.com, it takes the average mum one year and seven months to get their pre-baby body back. But it can be done. While pulling on a pair of workout leggings might not be top of your priority list right now, exercise offers big benefits for both you and baby. Not only might it reduce your stress levels and improve your body confidence, but research from Bupa also shows that mums who exercise claim it improves their parenting skills. Here's how to do it safely.

## GETTING STARTED

Let's start by answering the question that's on every fit mum's mind – when can you begin exercising? The answer is: it depends on your body, the method of delivery and whether a GP has given you the six-week 'all clear'. As a guideline, experts recommend that new mums avoid all physical stress (yes, even heavy lifting) for two weeks after birth – then you'll need to wait another four weeks until you can resume normal activities. And if you had a C-section, 12 weeks is a far more appropriate amount of time for healing. The hormone relaxin can continue to affect the elasticity of your ligaments and stability of joints for three to 12 months after labour and throughout the time you breastfeed. Be mindful of over-stretching for 16-20 weeks and don't



Breastfeeding and exercise drain the body of fluid. Be sure to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.

exercise to exhaustion until your joints feel stable again.

## WHAT TO DO

Good news – there is a silver lining because you can do some activities straight away. For example, it's fine to do some transverse abdominal (TVA) exercises and pelvic floor (PF) work such as Kegels (see nhs.uk) immediately post labour, and many mums can start strolling as well. Love running? Walking is the best starting point. The jury's out as to when new mums can begin running, mainly because it requires balance, a range of motion, good TVA strength and PF control. The sound advice is to listen to your body and begin with a gradual run-walk routine.

## TONE YOUR MUM TUM

Pilates is a great workout for new mums. After you've been cleared to exercise, a basic programme of post-natal Pilates will improve your posture and core

strength, as well as help you to regain full movement and co-ordination. A word of warning – it can take six weeks for abdominal muscles to recover from pregnancy – longer if they were weak before motherhood. Gentle ab exercises in the early post-natal period will be vital in tightening the tummy, but seek expert advice if you have had abdominal separation (also known as diastasis recti). ”

## BACK ON TRACK

Exercising after labour boasts a horde of benefits. Here are a few of the gains:

- Improves posture
- Helps weight loss
- Increases energy
- Reduces anxiety
- Boosts muscle endurance
- Improves mood

## MAXIMISE YOUR MAMA MOJO WITH THESE POST-PREGNANCY WORKOUT MOTIVATORS

### BUGABOO RUNNER

(£583; bugaboo.com)

If you'd like to jog with baby, this running pram is suitable for babes from nine months. Move the seat to let the little one look at you or face the world while you run. You can buy just the chassis and slot your existing Bugaboo upper onto it.

### #MUMONAMISSIION

(£5.99 a month; instructorlive.com)

This post-pregnancy programme was launched by new mum Kimberly Wyatt. It's spread across eight weeks to help post-natal women lose weight and gain strength. Do the 10-day free trial, then sign up if you like it.

### CAKE MATERNITY PRO IMPACT NURSING SPORTS BRA

(£44; cakematernity.com)

A good sports bra is essential for avoiding over-stretching the breast tissue if you're exercising while breastfeeding. The drop-down cups make feeding a breeze pre- or post-exercise.





# ESCAPE YOUR PLATEAU

Start seeing results again with this 10-minute routine to bust your fitness rut

Set your timer for 10 minutes, and do as many rounds as you can in the allocated time. Try to beat your score in each workout.



A



**Lunge with lateral raise**

**Reps: 20**

**Works:** Shoulders, abs, legs, glutes

○ Stand with your feet hip-width apart and a weight in each hand with your arms at your sides (A).

○ As you step forward into a lunge, raise the weights out to your sides at shoulder height (B).

○ Lower the weights as you return to the start. Repeat on the other leg.

B



A



B

### Ab pull-in

**Reps:** 20

**Works:** Abs, arms, lower back, hip flexors

- Lie flat on your back with your hands by your bottom. Push your upper body up a few centimetres and, keeping your legs straight, lift them off the floor (A).
- Keeping your legs together, pull your knees in towards your chest while lifting your head, neck and shoulders to meet your knees (B).
- Hold, then slowly return to starting position.



A



B

### Lateral raise

**Reps:** 20

**Works:** Shoulders, upper back, arms, core

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your arms by your sides with a dumbbell in each hand (A).
- Slowly raise your arms until they're in line with your shoulders (B).
- Hold for a second, then slowly lower them back to your sides while keeping your arms as straight as possible.



A



B



C

### Twisted ab pull-in

**Reps:** 20 (10 each side)

**Works:** Abs, obliques, arms, lower back, hip flexors

- Lie flat on your back with your hands by your bottom, then prop yourself up so your forearms are resting on the floor and your legs are off the floor (A).
- Keeping your legs together, pull your knees in towards you while lifting your head, neck and shoulders up to meet your knees.
- Twist your knees to the right (B), then slowly return to the start.
- Repeat, but this time, twist your knees left (C). Alternate with each rep.

CHANGE YOUR WORKOUT REGULARLY TO KEEP YOUR BODY GUESSING AND BOREDOM AT BAY.





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# EAT *Smart*

NUTRITION TIPS \* DIET ADVICE \* FOOD FACTS

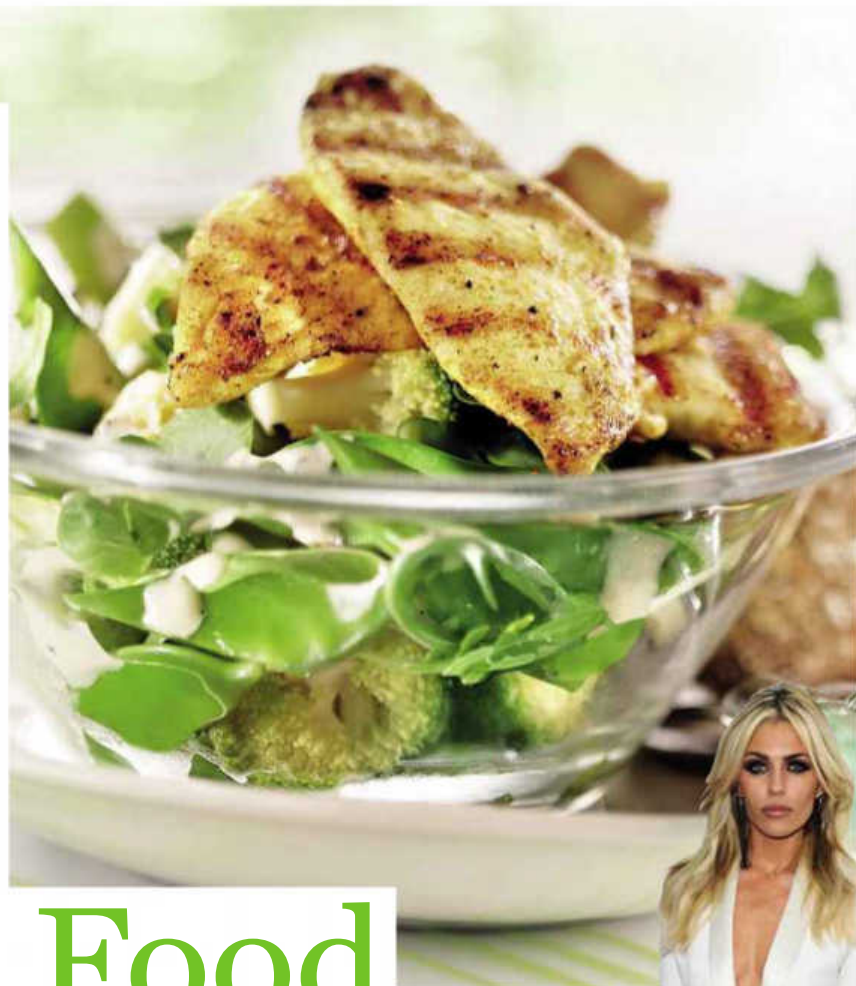
## *Heart-healthy vitamin*

Do you eat your five-a-day? If the answer's yes, you could be onto a winner, according to the latest research from the University of Copenhagen. The study analysed the DNA and fruit and veg intake of 10,000 Danes, finding those who ate the most had a 15 per cent lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease and 20 per cent reduced risk of early death, which researchers put down to the high levels of vitamin C in many fruit and veg, such as peppers, kale, kiwi, citrus fruits and berries.



## PROTEIN POWER

Want to stay full and beat hunger pangs? Try eating some protein before you eat a carb-heavy meal. A new study from Weill Cornell Medical College has found the order in which you eat different foods during a meal can influence your blood-sugar levels afterwards. People who ate vegetables and protein (chicken breast, broccoli and tomato salad with dressing) 15 minutes before carbohydrates (ciabatta bread and orange juice) had significantly lower glucose and insulin levels after eating. The findings may help diabetics control their symptoms, but we should all aim to include a serving of protein at each meal.



### IT'S THE NUTS

If you love peanut butter, pop one of Meridian's protein-packed peanut bars in your gym bag. Each 40g bar contains at least 7g of protein, from roasted peanuts rather than added, processed protein. We love the Peanut & Cocoa and Peanut & Banana flavours. The bars are free from gluten, dairy and soya and are suitable for vegans. They cost £1.19 from Holland & Barrett.



# Food NOTEBOOK

The latest news, research and healthy eats

## >40 mins<

The length of time your teeth are under attack following a snack. Protect your mouth by always brushing your teeth before you snack, says Oral B Smile Director Dr Uchenna Okoye.

## {CELEBRITY QUOTE}

'I live with a footballer, so we tend to eat healthily. But I'm so relaxed about it – we don't deny ourselves anything.'

Abby Clancy



## 3 OF THE BEST NEW ORGANIC PRODUCTS

It's time to celebrate all things organic as the Soil Association launches its biggest Organic September ever. Here are three ideas to get you started. For organic eating tips, visit [soilassociation.org](http://soilassociation.org)



### MEAL IN A BOX

Eat well without the faff of shopping and planning! Riverford's organic recipe boxes (from £33.95; [riverford.co.uk](http://riverford.co.uk)) give you three healthy meals for two. You'll find recipe cards and all the fresh, seasonal ingredients measured out. No waste. Just cook...



### FULL OF BEANS

Fava Beans are delicious, nutritious and good for the soil and bees. Hodmedod's Organic Split Fava Beans (£2.29 for 500g; [hodmedods.co.uk](http://hodmedods.co.uk)) are tasty, versatile and don't need soaking. They're great for dal, falafel or houmous – or in soups or curries and are grown on British farms.



### TIME FOR TEA

Inspired by travels in Latin America and blended in Dorset, Teatonics organic infusions (£4.35 for 14 bags; [teatonics.co.uk](http://teatonics.co.uk)) offer sensational flavours using therapeutic ingredients. Try Mind-Awakening Yerba Mate for a clean, zesty caffeine kick.

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<sup>1</sup>Glucomannan in the context of a calorie-restricted diet contributes to weight loss. Take with 1–2 glasses of water.

<sup>2</sup>In a research study, subjects taking the primary ingredient (glucomannan) in Hydroxycut® experienced a reduction in body weight when taken with a calorie-restricted diet.

<sup>3</sup>When taken as directed (3 times daily) you get 3g of glucomannan per day. Carefully read the entire label before use. Proper nutrition and regular training are essential to achieving your goals. © 2015





# Superfood SWAPS

The latest superfoods can cost a fortune, but the good news is that everyday, budget-friendly foods can pack an equivalent nutritional punch

**G**oji, baobab or moringa anyone? Gone are the days when 'superfood' meant a punnet of strawberries or a bunch of spinach. And, as the trend for buying exotic superfoods increases, so does the cost.

But there's good news if your budget won't stretch to these so-called treasure troves of nutrition. According to experts, we'd often be better sticking to tried-and-trusted foods and ignoring the obscure, often expensively imported products forced upon us by marketers.

'The term "superfood" has no regulatory approval and is not a legally recognised term,' says registered dietician Sioned Quirke. 'It's just a marketing term that has become trendy.'

One way that the likes of exotic dried fruits and green powders costing the price of gold dust reel us in is by quoting huge quantities of nutrients per 100g. Yet, in the small quantities

that you add to your smoothie or sprinkle over your cereal, the nutritional value is often not as high as the amount you get in healthy foods eaten in normal portion sizes, such as eggs, salmon, nuts and common fruit and veg.

NHS Choices points out that, though the EU has banned health claims on packaging unless supported by scientific evidence, this 'hasn't stopped many food brands from funding research on the health benefits of their product'. Often, they say, this research only tests chemicals and extracts in concentrations not found in the food in its natural state.

And, while many superfoods trumpet a high antioxidant concentration, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) found 'no evidence that the antioxidant action on free radicals observed in the lab was of any benefit to human health'. Food for thought. Try these money-saving, nutrition-boosting superfood swaps.

**THE SUPERFOOD****AÇAÍ BERRIES**

Açaí is famed for its high antioxidant content, and you'll get a decent amount of purple anthocyanins from a typical 10g daily dose of freeze-dried açaí powder costing around £2 (Greens Organic Freeze Dried Açaí Powder £9.99 for 50g from greensorganic.co.uk). Plus this dose of açaí will provide between an eighth and a sixth of the RDA (recommended daily amount) of vitamin E.

**THE EVERYDAY ALTERNATIVE****A BOWL OF BLACKBERRIES**

There's doubt as to whether anthocyanins actually act as antioxidants beyond human digestion, and their benefits may come from other activities such as damping down inflammation and keeping arteries more elastic. A typical 100g bowl of fresh blackberries (about £1.30) is likely to be higher in anthocyanins. The blackberries are also slightly richer in vitamin E (2.37mg per 100g, or nearly one sixth of your RDA). In fact, a bowl of any fresh berries is cheaper, tastier and as healthy as açaí.

**THE SUPERFOOD****BARLEY GRASS**

The new cousin of wheat grass – and nutritionally identical – barley grass is a cereal grass (consumed juiced or powdered) that, if you believe the PR hype, protects against inflammation, builds red blood cells and has as many nutrients in a 30ml shot as a kilogram of vegetables. According to the British Dietetic Association though, accredited tests show that gram for gram, the nutrient content of wheatgrass juice is roughly equivalent to that of common vegetables, such as spinach and broccoli.

**THE EVERYDAY ALTERNATIVE****BROCCOLI**

Barley grass powder typically costs 90p for 10g, while broccoli is just 11p for 80g. And



whereas broccoli counts as a veg portion, barley grass doesn't. A steamed 80g portion of broccoli boasts 28 per cent of the RDA of folic acid, 12 per cent of vitamin E and 24 per cent of vitamin C.

**THE SUPERFOOD****MORINGA**

This green powdered 'natural multivitamin' comes from the leaves of the African Moringa tree and there's no question it's a concentrated source of several nutrients. You're encouraged to consume 10g a day, which works out at 65p a day (Aduna Moringa powder, £12.99 for 200g from aduna.com). This gives you 30 per cent of your RDA of calcium, 19 per cent of your daily magnesium and 46.8 per cent of your daily iron needs. But, despite being hailed as high protein, a recommended 10g serving provides less than half the amount you'd find in a small boiled egg.

**THE EVERYDAY ALTERNATIVE**  
**ALL BRAN**

A 40g bowl plus 150ml of milk (costing 25p) provides 26 per cent of the RDA of magnesium – more than in a serving of moringa. All Bran can't quite match moringa's levels of iron or calcium (a bowl provides 25 per cent and 22.5 per cent of the RDA of these nutrients respectively), but it is a superior provider of B vitamins, protein (there's 10.9g of protein in a 40g bowl of All Bran and milk) and zinc, and, of course, a fantastic source of fibre. If you're after a good source of vitamins, you could take Centrum Advance (£5.29 for 30 tablets), for under 18p a day.

**THE SUPERFOOD****GOJI BERRIES**

These vibrant orange-red dried berries, available in supermarkets, are allegedly packed with vitamin C and carotenoids, including beta carotene, which the body can make into vitamin A. But there seems to be no reliable information as to how much of these nutrients the berries actually contain. A typical 30g serving (53p), however, contains 16.8g sugars, which is as much as a small glass of fruit juice.

**THE EVERYDAY ALTERNATIVE**  
**SPINACH**

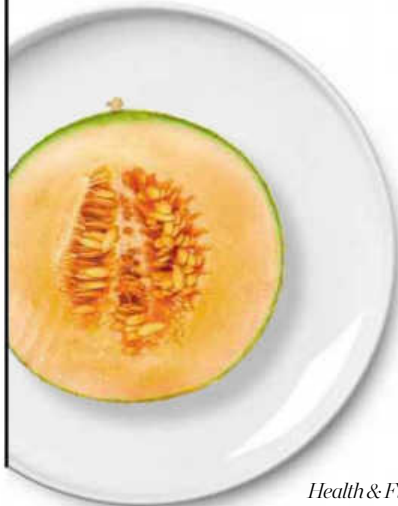
A portion of spinach (32p for 80g) is a cheaper stand-in, with 60 per cent of the RDA of vitamin A and 25 per cent of the RDA of vitamin C in an 80g serving of the raw leaves (plus plenty of folic acid, some iron and less sugar). Despite wild claims about the antioxidant potential of goji, even a humble apple may score better – at least in lab tests. Australia's largest consumer organisation, Choice (equivalent to our Which?) tested various products for their antioxidant capacity and found a humble Red Delicious apple was roughly equivalent to 10 x 30ml shots of Himalayan goji juice!

**THE SUPERFOOD****BAOBAB**

A powdery white fruit from southern Africa, 100g of dried baobab (£8.29 for 70g or £1.18 per dose from organicburst.com) offers five times more vitamin C than an equal weight of oranges, six times more potassium than bananas, and more than twice the calcium of milk. That all sounds amazing, until you consider that the dose you sprinkle into a smoothie or on your porridge is only about 10g, or a tenth of this, and therefore only provides 33 per cent of your vitamin C RDA, 10 per cent of your daily potassium requirement and just 3.6 per cent of your calcium RDA. On the plus side, even just a 10g dose supplies 4.7g fibre, which is as much as you'd find in one and three-quarter slices of wholemeal bread.

**THE EVERYDAY ALTERNATIVE**  
**CANTELOUPE MELON**

A 200g slice of this orange-fleshed melon (just 38 calories and around 33p if cut from a whole melon) supplies a little less fibre (3.6g) than 10g baobab powder, but counts as one of your five a day and provides 65 per cent of the RDA of vitamin C, 21 per cent of the RDA of potassium and five per cent of the RDA of calcium. ■





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# Beans on toast

Boost your nutrients with this delicious twist on a British classic

## NUTRITION INFO

### CANNELLINI BEANS

These white beans are low GI, packed with antioxidants and super-high in protein. They're also a great source of B vitamins, iron, potassium and zinc, plus are good for gut health as they're high in soluble fibre.



### GREEK YOGHURT

This type of yoghurt contains twice the protein of regular yoghurt, helping you feel fuller for longer – and just half the carbs. Stick to low-fat or fat-free versions, though, as the full-fat type is high in saturated fat.



### SAGE

This herb is high in B vitamins such as folic acid, plus it boasts good amounts of vitamin A and minerals such as iron, potassium and calcium. Fresh sage contains vitamin C.

## WHITE BEAN, LEMON & SAGE PURÉE

**Serves:** 2–4

**Preparation time:** 10 minutes

**400g tin cannellini beans, rinsed and drained**

**Zest and juice ½ lemon**

**3 tbsp Greek yoghurt**

**1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for frying**

**20 small sage leaves**

**½ baguette**

**Salt and freshly ground black pepper**

**1** Place the drained beans in a bowl and, using a fork or potato masher, crush to a rough paste. Add most of the lemon zest and all the juice, the yoghurt, 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Finely chop a few sage leaves and add them to the beans. Stir well.

**2** Drizzle a little oil into a small frying pan and set over a medium heat. Add half the remaining sage leaves and fry for 30 seconds until dark green and crispy, watching to make sure they don't burn.

Drain on kitchen paper and repeat with the rest of the leaves.

**3** Heat the grill. Halve the baguette vertically, then again horizontally so that you have four pieces. Rub the cut surfaces of the baguette in the oil left in the sage pan, then pop under the grill to toast. Top the baguette with spoonfuls of the bean puree, the remaining lemon zest, a good grinding of black pepper, the crispy sage leaves and any remaining oil from the pan.



# NUTRITION expert



After a new report on carbs and health, should we be altering what we eat? asks **Amanda Hamilton**

**“ It may have taken seven years to produce, but finally the Government's independent Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) has produced the Carbohydrates and Health report that will inform future healthy eating policy issued by Public Health England.**

The part of the report that's received most publicity is the advice that recommended intakes of free sugars should be halved from a maximum of 10 per cent of energy intake to five per cent (or around 25g a day), to help address obesity, diabetes and tooth decay. Free sugars are those added to food (including processed foods) or those naturally present in honey, syrups and unsweetened fruit juices, but exclude sugars in whole fruits and vegetables and the sugar (lactose) naturally present in dairy products.

## WHAT'S IN THE BAG?

All well and good, but how can you find out how much free sugar is in packaged food? The truth is it's impossible to know exactly, as the sugar you see listed on the nutrition information panel on a label is the figure for total sugar – and this is what the traffic lights for sugar on a food relate to as well. A quick scan of the ingredients list will help you work out if there's much free sugar in the products or not though – if sugar, sucrose, syrups, fructose, honey, dextrose or glucose are mentioned near the top of the list, or several times through it, there's likely to be quite a lot.



I also believe it's good to inject some common sense and reality though: we can sometimes stress too much about small amounts of 'hidden' sugar in essentially nutritious foods such as yoghurts, pasta sauces and soups, while being in denial about the puddings, sweet treats and booze we allow ourselves every day! Suffice to say, the 'obvious' sugary foods are by far the largest contributors of sugar in the diet and you are responsible for how many of them you choose to eat!

## FIBRE UP

SACN's other main carb and health advice – which was largely lost behind the sugar headlines – is that we should all consume a lot more fibre from carb sources such as wholegrains, pulses, potatoes and fruit and veg. Fibre is very much a Cinderella nutrient, but upping your intake could reduce rates of bowel cancer and heart disease, as well as helping to curb obesity through filling you up (as fibre is bulky). Current advice is to consume 24g fibre a

day, but the new suggested intake is 30g. In practical terms, meeting this target means basing meals around wholegrains (such as brown rice, quinoa and wholemeal bread) and eating around eight portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

Does this new review from top scientists mean we can lay carb bashing to rest? I hope so, because while you need to moderate carb portions – something the size of your fist when it comes to pasta or rice is about right – I've never been in the low-carb camp and have always advocated healthy slow-release carbs instead, which is exactly in tune with the SACN report.

In short, remove white, highly refined starches and sugars from your diet and fill up on unrefined, slow-releasing high-fibre, whole-food types instead. Hardly rocket science, but definitely a potential revolution for your health and waistline. ”

Amanda Hamilton is a nutritionist, health expert and author of three wellbeing books, who regularly features on BBC television and radio, *Good Morning Britain* and *UKTV*. She's the founder and director of a retreat company. See [amandahamilton.co.uk](http://amandahamilton.co.uk)

PHOTOGRAPHY: Thinkstock

## Q&A

**What does a diet that provides 30g fibre and less than five per cent energy from free sugars actually look like? Here's one day's suggestion from the British Nutrition Foundation.**

### BREAKFAST

- Two wheat biscuits (for example, Weetabix),

semi-skimmed milk, one chopped banana

- Unsweetened tea

### LUNCH

- Cheese, chutney and salad on a malted wheat roll

- One pear

### DINNER

- Homemade vegetarian bean

chilli with brown rice

- Small chocolate

### SNACK

- 40g unsalted

nuts and raisins

- 175ml

glass of red wine





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# 'What I ate today'

## Ness Knight

The endurance adventurer, 30, explains how she gets – and sustains – her energy levels during challenges



### BREAKFAST

'Most of my endurance events are between 150 and 1,000 miles over multiple days or weeks, so the right nutrition is crucial. I need 6,000 calories a day and to be able to hold it down between constant exercise. I usually have six smaller meals a day, eating some breakfast before and some after my workout. If I'm doing an early dawn cycle, I'll eat half a banana, and drink a fresh green raw juice with spirulina powder in it beforehand. After, I'll do an omelette with three egg whites, one egg with yolk, red onion, cherry tomatoes, mushrooms, with seeded whole bread (toasted) and avocado.'



### LUNCH

'I steer clear of processed food for my main meals. I tend to eat red meat at lunchtime, so I don't go to bed with a belly full of steak. I'll have sliced beef with a light peppercorn sauce, spinach, beetroot, cucumber, cherry tomato, spring onion, raw red cabbage and gherkins with a slug of olive oil and balsamic vinegar, plus some quinoa.'

### TREATS

'I'm a sucker for Italian food. I love a giant calzone or spaghetti carbonara. I can't resist cinema popcorn. Oh, and I love cheesecake too!'



### DINNER

'I tend to eat less carbs at dinner. Sushi is a favourite – it reminds me of Cape Town, where I grew up. I like salmon or tuna sashimi, rice, seaweed, edamame beans and avocado, plus a carrot and ginger juice. I'm also loving my spiralizer!'

### SNACKS

'I drink a smoothie for recovery – pineapple, banana, natural yoghurt, coconut oil and shavings, turmeric and cinnamon. I often crush nuts and add them too. When I'm doing endurance events, I fill up on calorie-dense foods – from avocado to protein bars or a full English.'



### HYDRATION & SUPPLEMENTS

'I usually drink 2.5l alongside herbal teas. I'm not a great water drinker (and a very good coffee guzzler) so I'm trying fruit infusion water bottles to help me drink more water. On expedition, water intake is vital to performance and wellbeing. I usually keep sachets of electrolyte with me in case my sugar and salt levels crash without me realising. I take a multivitamin, omega 3, and the occasional iron and magnesium tablets. For cleansing, I use Bentonite clay. When on expedition, I use a joint formula, too.'



Nutritionist  
Fiona Hunter

## NUTRITIONIST'S VERDICT

'Ness needs about three times as many calories as those of us who aren't in training for endurance events, but it isn't easy to consume that many calories without feeling too full to exercise. The secret is to eat little and often – six small but nutrient-dense meals. Avocado is an ideal food for Ness because it's highly calorific (one avocado contains around 300 calories) but also highly nutritious. Ness gets lots of vitamins and minerals from her diet, but intense exercise generates free radicals. This increases her need for some vitamins and minerals and good bacteria, so a multivitamin is a good idea, and a probiotic supplement will boost beneficial bacteria in her gut.'

SCORE

8  
10



**ATTENTION: Ladies** that attend fitness classes or who have home workout DVD's and who aren't getting the results they'd like to get from their current workout!

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**Wendy AFTER Kettlercise**

**Wendy BEFORE Kettlercise**  
"TOTAL LOST - 14lb's & 21 inches!"  
**Wendy AFTER Kettlercise**

**Alison BEFORE Kettlercise**  
"TOTAL LOST - 16lb's & 18.5 inches!"  
**Alison AFTER Kettlercise**

**Susan BEFORE Kettlercise**  
"TOTAL LOST - 14lb's & 11 inches!"  
**Susan AFTER Kettlercise**

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\*Individual results may vary. Exercise and correct nutrition are necessary to achieve and maintain weight loss and muscle tone.





## GUT FEELING

Ever wondered why you can't stop at one fatty treat? According to latest research from the University of Georgia, eating high-fat foods alters the balance of your gut bacteria, dampening the effect of 'fullness' signals to the brain. 'The brain is changed by eating unbalanced foods,' says researcher Krzysztof Czaja. 'It induces inflammation in the brain regions responsible for feeding behaviour. Those reorganised circuits and inflammation may alter satiety signalling.' It's not known whether the changes are permanent or reversible. More research is planned but, in the meantime, it's time to step away from the biscuit tin!

# Diet NOTEBOOK

The latest advice on staying slim

### { CELEBRITY QUOTE }

'I can't really have naughty food in the house, whether that's a mint Aero or finger of fudge, because I just have to eat it.'

Lorraine Pascal

## <200>

The average extra daily calories you'll get if you eat your meals outside the home. That's 20lbs of weight gain a year.

### SIP 'N' SLIM

Fire up your metabolism with Bodyism's new I Am Slender Tea (£21 for 30 teabags; [bodyism.com](http://bodyism.com)). The ayurvedic infusion combines traditional herbs and roots that stimulate the body into fat-burning mode. It's just one of the new Clean and Lean Wellness Teas.



## HEALTHY COOKING

### COOK SLIM

**The Pure Package and Leith's Nutrition in Practice Course** ([leiths.com](http://leiths.com))

Do you love cooking but feel your culinary creations are sabotaging your weight-loss efforts? Acclaimed cookery school Leiths has teamed up with gourmet dietary food service company The Pure Package to launch a course – Nutrition in Practice: The

Accreditation – that arms you with the nutritional knowledge you need to cook healthy, balanced meals. Over 10 weeks (one day a week), Leith's professional chefs and nutritional experts from The Pure Package will teach you about portion control, menu planning for dietary needs, weight management, understanding food labels, managing food allergies and much more. With hands-on cookery sessions and

informative discussions, you'll soon feel more confident in the kitchen, whether you want to make calorie-controlled meals or cook healthily for families and friends. The first course runs from September 21 until November 23 and costs £2,995. For more details, visit [leiths.com](http://leiths.com).





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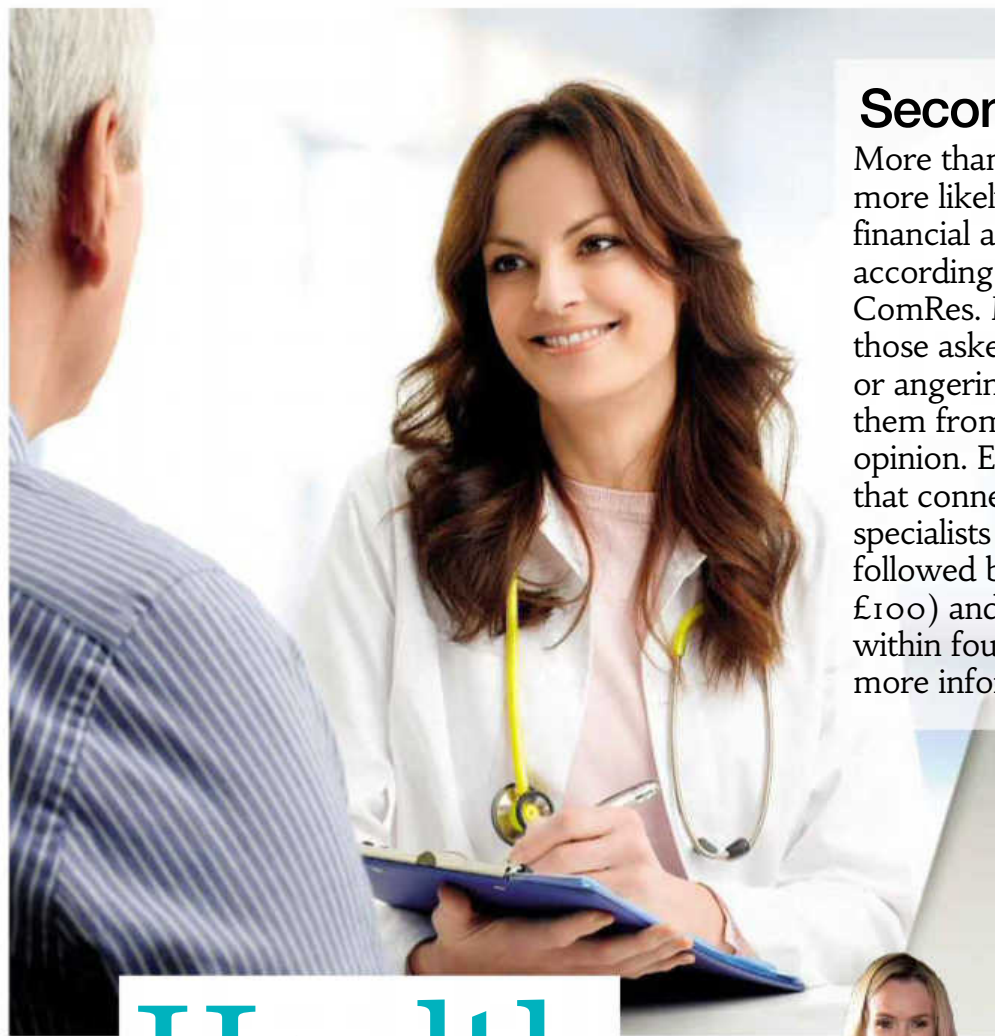
LATEST NEWS \* MIND AND BODY \* EXPERT ADVICE

## *Engage brain*

They may be packed full of helpful apps and give you loads of useful information, but smartphones might be making us lazy when it comes to how we think. A University of Waterloo study recently found that intuitive thinkers (those who rely on gut feeling when making a decision) forgo brainpower and rely on their device's search engine when trying to find something out. Worse still, researchers believe this could have adverse effects on how we age. Is it time to #switchoff?







## Second opinions

More than a third of adults in the UK are more likely to seek a second opinion on financial advice than on their own health, according to research consultancy ComRes. More worryingly, a fifth of those asked said concern about offending or angering their doctor would stop them from asking for a second medical opinion. Enter Diagnose.me, a platform that connects patients to leading health specialists for an online consultation, followed by a detailed report (costing £100) and follow-up communication within four days. Visit [diagnose.me](http://diagnose.me) for more information.

# Health NOTEBOOK

Your mind and body in the news



## BACTERIA BUSTER

From cuts to abrasions, Jack Black Mr Fix It Antimicrobial Wound Rescue (£15.50 for 29ml; [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)) contains silver (55mg/L) to help stave off infection by reducing surface bacteria.



## OUCH!

ONE IN FIVE BRITS WILL WAIT UNTIL HEADACHE OR MIGRAINE SYMPTOMS ARE UNBEARABLE BEFORE SEEKING PAIN RELIEF\*.

## { CELEBRITY QUOTE }

'It's all about balance – if you're going to really indulge, be healthier the next day.'

Amanda Holden

## BEAT THE BACK-TO-WORK BLUES!

Exit holiday mode and enter September with a bang!

### GET TIME TO REST

A University of Eastern Finland study, focusing on heart rate variability, found longer breaks between shifts helped nurses recover better. They backed forward-rotating shifts (a shift followed by one that starts later the next day).

### FUEL UP


The journal *Population Health Management* shows that eating unhealthily could make you 66 per cent less productive. More reason to pack a nutritious lunch box!

### GO POTTY

Boost productivity and mood with pot plants, souvenirs or pictures of loved ones. A study from Exeter University found pleasant surroundings could make you 15 per cent more on the ball.

### TAKE FIVE

Take five to stop and pay more attention to the present moment. An Ohio State University study found mindfulness at work helps reduce stress.



# Should you believe the hype surrounding running-shoe tech?

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# Bad habits *GONE GOOD*

Remove any feelings of guilt after having a lazy lie-in or that extra cup of coffee, as we reveal the bad habits that might make you healthier



**e've all got bad habits, whether it's not taking off our make-up before bed once in a while, being a prolific gum**

**chewer or having a sweet tooth.** But, as much as these vices get blamed for a host of ills, there's also surprising emerging science and expert advice to suggest you shouldn't feel guilty for some habits traditionally labelled as unhealthy. In fact, they could even be making you healthier.

Case in point, coffee. Caffeine fans are often made to feel guilty for reaching for their fix but, on top of being tasty and providing an energy boost, the latest research has found that coffee might be good for liver function. A team from the National Cancer Institute discovered higher coffee consumption (decaffeinated and caffeinated) was linked to lower levels of abnormal liver enzymes. Chemical compounds in the coffee could be protecting your liver. Health expert Dr Sally Norton (vavista.com) agrees that a couple of cups of coffee can wield health benefits. 'As well as increased alertness, there's been research to suggest that coffee can reduce Type 2 diabetes risk. But steer clear of an afternoon coffee, as it takes several hours to pass through your system and can disrupt sleep,' she explains.

So next time you feel pangs of guilt when hitting the snooze button or indulging in a weekend takeaway and bottle of wine – don't. Instead, take note of these other so-called 'bad' habits...

## **YOUR VICE:**

### **INDULGING IN A LITTLE CHOCOLATE**

We're a nation of chocoholics, but you may have been born with that sweet tooth. New research, published in *Twin Research and Human Genetics*, suggests that genes account for 30 per cent of variation in sweetness preference from person to person, meaning some may want more in order to be satisfied. Genes aside, Alexander Thompson, nutritionist for Holland & Barrett, confirms that chocolate has its health benefits, too. 'Cocoa solids within chocolate contain phytonutrients called flavonoids, shown to increase the levels of a hormone called nitric oxide, which can dilate and boost the flexibility of blood vessels,' he says. 'This, in turn, helps to lower blood pressure and also increases blood flow, resulting in improved delivery of oxygen and nutrients in the body.'

Thompson suggests that this process is thought to be partly responsible for boosting cognitive function and athletic performance, and can help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. He recommends opting for chocolate with a high percentage of cocoa solids (at least 70 per cent). One to two squares a day is sufficient; the stronger flavour of this chocolate means you're less likely to overeat it.

## **YOUR VICE:**

### **HAVING A LAZY MORNING**

We all start off with the best of intentions for a weekend – get up early, exercise, eat

a nutritious breakfast – but it's easier said than done, and often we end up spending the morning dozing in bed. But rather than feeling guilty about 'a morning misspent' or missing a workout, appreciate the benefits this lie-in has had for your health.

Professor Kevin Morgan of the Loughborough Clinical Sleep Research Unit explains being in bed for longer isn't about quantity of sleep but the overall experience. 'It serves as a restorative function both physiologically and mentally,' he says. It might also be helping your metabolism. A study from the University of Munich found people who wake to an alarm, rather than their body's internal clock, are three times more likely to be overweight than those who wake naturally.

## **YOUR VICE:**

### **CHEWING GUM**

According to data from global information company Nielsen, the gum industry is worth £260 million and, with a rise in sales comes a rise in cost to clear up mess left by discarded sticky blobs. Add over-zealous chompers, who can be irritating to sit near, into the mix and you can see why chewing gum has been labelled a bad habit. However, there are some benefits to chewing gum too. Countless emerging scientific research suggests that chewing gum can be good for your health, particularly cognitive ability. The latest discovery from the University of Reading found that chewing gum could reduce the amount you hear a song that's stuck in



your head by a third. Research has also shown that chewing gum for at least 10 minutes can help to reduce levels of stress hormones such as cortisol while improving mental focus. 'The key is to choose a sugar-free gum, otherwise the sugar content of chewing gum will add extra calories and counteract the benefits for dental health,' says Thompson.

'Ideally, opt for a gum containing the ingredient xylitol, a natural sugar substitute which has been shown to have an alkalinising effect in the mouth and half the available calories of standard table sugar (sucrose),' he adds. Try Peppersmith Fine English Peppermint Chewing Gum (£1.99 for 15g; hollandandbarrett.com).

#### YOUR VICE:

### TAKING A DAY OFF FROM EATING HEALTHILY

We all understand why you should eat a nutritious, balanced diet, but you can also reap the health rewards of occasionally falling off the healthy eating wagon.

'Eating less healthy foods occasionally, say a takeaway pizza with high levels of refined carbohydrate and fat, will do little damage to your weight or health provided the majority of your diet is composed of foods with a more balanced dietary composition (lower fat, lower sugar and higher in fibre, protein and whole carbohydrate sources),' says Thompson.

So-called flexible dieting is not only associated with lower body weight, but also reduced anxiety and depression, shows a study in *The Journal of Appetite*. He recommends aiming for an 80:20 balance in favour of healthy foods, and avoiding the term or notion 'cheat meal,' as it tricks the mind in to thinking that healthy meals can't be satisfying.

#### YOUR VICE:

### SPLURGING MONEY

Seen a pair of shoes that you love, but don't ever buy? Retail therapy has scientific backing, so it might be time to treat yourself. The University of Michigan found 'going on an occasional spree' could make you feel more in control of life and diminish feelings of sadness. Go one step further and splurge on experiential products (books or musical instruments) or experience-based purchases – a study in the *Association for Psychological Science* found that the enjoyment of these begins even before we splash the cash. Dr Norton advises making it a family affair. 'If your splurge involves sharing an experience with friends or family it will strengthen social ties, important for mental health.' ■

## GOOD HABITS THAT MIGHT BE BAD FOR YOU

**Drinking 'too much' water:** It's important to stay hydrated, but over-drinking when exercising can cause health risks. Mitchell Rosner, MD, a kidney specialist at the University of Virginia School of Medicine recommends using your thirst as a guide and avoiding excessive consumption during physical exercise.

**Heavy-duty exercising in the morning:** Getting in an intense training session first thing can leave you more exposed to viral or bacterial infection, say experts from Brunel University. Try milder forms of exercise such as a gentle jog or a slow yoga class in the mornings and save your heavier workouts until later on.

**Grazing on several small meals throughout the day:** Scientists from Purdue University in the US discovered that, contrary to popular belief, those who graze on several small meals throughout the day experience more hunger than those who eat three decent-sized meals. Maybe it's time to put away those crudités.



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# AND... RELAX

Hectic working hours? Relationship problems? Try these relaxation exercises to help banish stress

**T**hink of that relaxed feeling you get after a massage or yoga session. Wouldn't it be bliss to access that calm sensation at any time? Well, you can – even if you've just had an argument with your partner or you're having to work late. Here are some techniques to help you relax and get a clearer head from renowned mind-body health expert Dr Alice D. Domar. They really work!



## PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)

**What is it?** When you're stressed, you tense your muscles, which leads to further stress. This technique takes you through your body, relaxing all the muscles and, in turn, soothing your mind.

**How to do it:** Close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Now concentrate on your forehead. Tighten your forehead muscles and count slowly from one to five. Then relax your forehead while breathing out slowly. Be aware of your breathing. Repeat. Now do the same for your eyes – tighten the muscles around your eyes for a slow count from one to five. Then let go of the tension there and breathe out slowly and deeply. Using this same technique, work your way around the body (jaw, neck, right shoulder and so on).

**Hint:** Got busy thoughts and find it impossible to meditate? This exercise uses your body to relax your mind.

## GUIDED IMAGERY

**What is it?** Relaxing through the use of mental images to bring about inner calm.

**How to do it:** Find a quiet, comfortable space and breathe slowly. In your mind, picture a place you love, somewhere that

always makes you feel relaxed. It could be a favourite beach, meadow or whatever works for you. Imagine yourself sitting there. Conjure up all the colours and shapes, smells, sounds and movements around you. Become completely absorbed in the sensual detail of this place.

**Hint:** If your tranquillity is interrupted by an anxious thought, just observe it, then let it pass by like a cloud and return to the good feelings in your comforting place.

## AUTOGENIC TRAINING

**What is it?** The use of verbal suggestions to transport you to a place of deep relaxation.

**How to do it:** Get comfortable and imagine your breaths coming and going like ocean waves. Think to yourself 'My breath is calm and effortless' and repeat it as you imagine waves of relaxation rolling through your body – your chest and shoulders, your arms and back, your hips and legs. Continue this for several minutes. Now, paying attention to your arms and hands, think to yourself 'My arms are heavy and warm. Warmth is flowing through my arms into my wrists, hands and fingers. My arms and hands are heavy and warm.' Keep doing this for a few minutes, then move to the other parts of your body,

spending longer on the areas that feel like they have the most tension stored. When you've finished, count to three, taking a deep inhalation and out-breath for each number. Open your eyes, get up slowly and stretch.

**Hint:** Use your phone or tablet to make an audio recording of yourself reading the instructions so you can access it at any time.

## BREATH FOCUS

**What is it?** A method of breathing deeply into your belly to help release tension.

**How to do it:** Begin by taking a normal breath; observe it. Now consciously take a slow, deep breath. Watch and feel how your belly fills when you breathe deeply. Then exhale through your mouth. Now do one normal breath, followed by one slow, deep abdominal breath. Take note of how you feel on each in- and out- breath. Is your normal breathing restricted? As you continue to practise and observe this technique, think to yourself on every inhalation 'Breathing in peace and calm' and on every exhalation 'Breathing out tension and anxiety.' Continue for 10 minutes.

**Hint:** Put stickers on the bathroom mirror, fridge and kettle. When you see one, take a deep breath into your belly.



## SHELF HELP

Each issue, we bring you the best advice from self-help classics. This month, we look at *Don't Sweat The Small Stuff* by Richard Carlson (Hodder, £6.99).  
**In a nutshell:** If you wake up at

night fretting over conversations you've had during the day, or worry about things that might never happen, this book is for you. It teaches you to live in the present moment and become a calmer, happier, more laidback

person. Hooray!

**A nugget:** 'A strategy for becoming more peaceful and loving is to allow others the joy of being right. Stop correcting. The people in your life will become less defensive and more loving.'





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## BEAUTY WITH A HEART

Trusting in beauty is important and a theme for this year's Organic Beauty Week (September 14-21) is raising awareness about brands that carry a stamp of approval from organic certification bodies (such as The Soil Association or Ecocert). This way you'll know your products contain a minimum level of organic ingredients and come with a commitment to the environment and worker conditions. The Campaign for Clarity by The Soil Association will be running activities such as shopping evenings with talks and discounts on organic beauty products during Organic Beauty Week. Visit [soilassociation.org/organicbeautyweek](http://soilassociation.org/organicbeautyweek).



## Beauty NOTEBOOK

Look your best with the latest products



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**JURLIQUE MOISTURISING HAND SANITISER, £7 for 50ml;**  
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**NEAL'S YARD REMEDIES ORGANIC DEFENCE HAND SPRAY, £6.50 for 50ml;**  
[nealsyardremedies.com](http://nealsyardremedies.com)

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# HAIR REPAIR

If a summer of sun, sea and sports has taken its toll on your hair, follow our expert tips for getting it back to its former glory



**W**e all look forward to the holiday season, but hair can really suffer, especially if you've jetted off to sunnier shores where the heat and sun can dry hair out. If you've been active, chlorine-filled water may have wrecked your colour, while salty seas can turn tresses crisp in seconds.

The holiday package is undeniably a strain on hair. But don't fret! If you're still to have your sunny break, the damage can be avoided, says Fabian Lliguin, co-founder and creative director of Rahua, a beauty brand that harnesses the power of Amazonian ingredients. 'The best way to shield your hair from the sun is to use products infused with antioxidants, such as green tea, which can help mitigate UV rays through protective polyphenols (a type of antioxidant). While on holiday, another easy way to protect hair and its colour is to co-wash – wash using conditioner only. Plant oils such as coconut oil can cleanse hair more gently than chemical detergents,' he says.

If the damage has already been done, don't lose hope. Lliguin recommends using a hydrating mask once a week, especially if your hair has been exposed to pool water, and to use styling products that contain natural oils to treat your hair more kindly.

'To repair hair's elasticity, look for products containing vitamin E, wheat protein or quinoa,' says Lliguin. 'The beauty of quinoa is its small protein molecule, which allows it to make repairs deeper into the hair shaft – and it's gluten-free.'

## YOUR HAIR TLC KIT

**1. Insight Coloured Hair Protective Mask, £9 for 500ml; [mrventuresstore.co.uk](http://mrventuresstore.co.uk)**

This mask boasts eco ingredients such as organic macadamia oil, mango butter and grapeseed oil that fight environmental damage, brighten hair colour and protect it from fading.

**2. Green People Quinoa Shampoo & Conditioner, £9.95 for 100ml; [greenpeople.co.uk](http://greenpeople.co.uk)**

South American grain quinoa is proven to improve hair's shine by over 50 per cent, while artichoke extract fights frizz.

**3. Macadamia Flawless 6 in 1 Cleansing Conditioner, £7.90 for 90ml; [macadamiahair.co.uk](http://macadamiahair.co.uk)**

This shampoo and conditioner combo is a hydrating treat for very dry, coarse, curly or Afro hair and it can plump up finer hair.

It contains macadamia and argan oils to cleanse and soften hair naturally.

**4. Balance Me Protect and Shine Shampoo, £10 for 200ml; [balanceme.co.uk](http://balanceme.co.uk)**

This is 97 per cent natural with a beautifully zesty scent. Mandarin oil adds

gloss, grapefruit oil cleanses, aloe vera hydrates and chamomile softens. It's sulphate-, mineral oil- and silicone-free.

**5. Weleda Revitalising Hair Tonic, £11.50 for 100ml; [weleda.co.uk](http://weleda.co.uk)**

Scalp need some TLC? Try Weleda's trusted formula of rosemary leaf oil and horseradish leaf extract to stimulate hair follicles and promote a healthy scalp.

**6. Rahua Finishing Treatment, £38 for 60ml; [cultbeauty.co.uk](http://cultbeauty.co.uk)**

Swap synthetic silicones for gorgeous, natural oils. Rahua contains the Amazonian rahua nut, loved by local women for its nourishing properties. Use this 100 per cent natural styling cream on dry hair to tame frizz and soften ends or on wet hair as a blow-dry prep.

## QUICK TIP

*'Look for oils (such as argan) that contain the omegas to help repair damaged ends and hydrate hair follicles,' says Fabian Lliguin, co-founder of Rahua Beauty. Try Rahua Omega 9 Hair Mask, £48 for 200ml; [cultbeauty.co.uk](http://cultbeauty.co.uk).*





# The Healthy Alternative

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# SHOULD YOU GO WITHOUT?

Going 'free-from' has never been so popular, but is it good for your health?

WORDS: Becky Fletcher



Have you noticed the huge areas of supermarket shelves dedicated to gluten- and dairy-free products? Or, how the internet and social media are crammed with recipes and advice for people removing certain foods from their diets? Welcome to the elimination-diet boom.

What was once the preserve of people with – or trying to determine – a food allergy, is now becoming the norm. Not only did 'elimination diet' rank as one of Google's most searched diets last year, but sales of gluten-free products reached a whopping £184 million in the UK, with one in 10 food launches being gluten free. But why this sudden popularity? 'There's confusion as to whether we're going 'free-from' because we need to or just because it's available and popular,' says independent nutrition therapist Ian Marber ([ianmarber.com](http://ianmarber.com)). So what are the consequences for our health? Time to separate the fact from the fiction.

## ELIMINATION CLARITY

An elimination diet involves removing foods or food groups from your diet. It's usually prescribed by a GP or practitioner, along with other diagnostic tests, to help identify a potential food allergy or intolerance.

You see if symptoms are alleviated by eliminating the foods, before reintroducing each one to see if there's a reaction.

Food allergies can vary in severity, with symptoms ranging from hives, itchiness of the throat or mouth and swelling, to vomiting or even collapse. Coeliac disease, a life-long autoimmune condition triggered by gluten, can also cause serious symptoms, including stomach pain, weight loss and fatigue. Anyone suffering from these conditions has to remove the antagonist food from their diet.

Food intolerances are less severe than allergies and lead to symptoms such as bloating and cramping. Lactose intolerance (an inability to digest lactose in dairy products) may trigger diarrhoea or stomach pain, for instance, while wheat intolerance may trigger bloating, unusual bowel movements and abdominal pain.

But are more of us really suffering or is it simply our increased awareness of food intolerances and subsequent self-diagnosis that's creating the boom in elimination diets?

## WHY IS IT SO POPULAR?

One argument is that increased access to health information and testing means that more people are being diagnosed with food-related conditions. For instance,





Orthorexia – the obsession with eating foods deemed healthy – is on the rise





coeliac disease screening only began in the mid nineties. 'There has been a fourfold increase in the rate of diagnosed cases of coeliac disease in the UK over the past two decades,' says gastroenterologist Professor David Sanders, co-founder of the Sheffield Institute of Gluten-Related Disorders. He believes this is down to awareness, education and improvement of diagnosis. 'Approximately three quarters of people with the condition (500,000 individuals in the UK) remain undiagnosed, according to an *American Journal of Gastroenterology* study,' he adds.

Nevertheless, research into the prevalence of non-coeliac gluten sensitivity is still in its infancy and under debate in the medical community. 'The findings show a slow increase in favour of it existing, although there's still much work to be done,' explains nutritionist, Shona

Wilkinson, Head Nutritionist at the Nutricentre ([nutricentre.com](http://nutricentre.com)). Wilkinson suggests that intolerances are on the increase due to the possibility of increased refinement of foods. A study from the University of Warwick found that gastrointestinal issues may derive from consumption of greater levels of all highly processed products, but reiterated that lightly processed wholegrains are rich in dietary fibre, fat, minerals, lignans and phenolic compounds and shouldn't be cut out unnecessarily.

According to the Dairy Council, just five per cent of Brits are intolerant to lactose, while one per cent are affected by coeliac disease and less than two per cent of adults are affected by a food allergy. But still people are self-diagnosing, something that nutrition experts and doctors warn against. 'If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, you should never self diagnose – always go to your doctor first,' says

Marber. 'Bloating, blisters, headaches, losing weight and other symptoms can all be attributed elsewhere.' Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), for instance, can result in similar symptoms. 'IBS is very difficult to test for because it's a syndrome,' explains Marber. 'It's also often attributable to having bad bacteria in the stomach as a result of eating too many carbohydrates and sugars, as these thrive in that type of environment.'

## 'GLUTEN-FREE WORKED FOR ME'



**Enna Bartlett, 24, copywriter & photographer**  
([ennabartlett.co.uk](http://ennabartlett.co.uk))  
**cut out gluten and saw the health benefits**

*'From the age of 18, I knew something wasn't right with my digestion, but it was only when I couldn't get to university without having to find a loo en-route that I went to the doctor. Initially they diagnosed IBS, but I pushed for a blood test and discovered I had gluten intolerance. I eliminated gluten from my diet – and started reading up on it, checking labels and cooking a lot at home, as eating out was difficult. In six months, I started to feel normal again. If you're experiencing symptoms, go to the doctor straight away.'*

## IS IT HEALTHY?

According to Mintel, 15 per cent of households now avoid gluten and wheat. Half of these do so only because they associate gluten-free and dairy-free with being healthy. A poll by Weetabix found that two fifths of people believe gluten is man-made and that slim celebs are one of the biggest influences for elimination diets. Everyone from Novak Djokovic to Miley Cyrus have voiced the health benefits of going gluten-free, while actress and GOOP creator Gwyneth Paltrow reportedly removes gluten from her children's diet. 'Every nutritionist, doctor and health-conscious person I have ever come across seems to concur that (gluten) is tough on the system and many of us are at best intolerant of it and at worst allergic to it,' she has said. Paltrow's latest free-from venture is a range of organic and gluten-free ready meals launched in partnership with celeb fitness trainer and friend, Tracy Anderson.

But is there any evidence that going gluten- or dairy-free can make the healthy any healthier? Research suggests not. Not only might you be missing some nutrients that are in wholegrains or dairy, you may be exposing yourself to weight gain, according to a study published in the *Journal of Medicinal Food*. The authors suggest it might be down to gluten-free products having more calories, sugars and fats than those containing gluten.

Marber emphasises that 'free-from' isn't synonymous with healthy eating. 'It's common to demonise foods and this isn't helped by many "uninformed" people in the public eye saying gluten and dairy can



cause health problems for the majority,' he says. 'But celebrities and bloggers often think "if these specific changes work for me, they'll work for anybody" and there's no reference to what they may have been eating before they began feeling better. It becomes problematic when elimination diets are promoted by people who don't understand the biochemistry of foods or the science behind it.'

## WEIGHT-LOSS MYTHS

Many women are choosing to go 'free-from' because they believe that gluten-free equals weight loss – something that Marber refutes. 'There's no robust evidence,' he says. 'In a controlled environment, replacing gluten with other non-gluten flours will not result in you shedding pounds,' he says.

If you've eliminated a food group, such as dairy or wheat, and lost weight, it's likely to be because you've reduced your overall calorie intake or are focusing on healthy eating and cutting out other foods such as sugar, says Marber. 'Cumulatively, all these things add up to something bigger, but the one thing you peg it on is giving up gluten,' he says. It's important to understand nutrition and not simply label gluten and dairy as the enemy, he warns.

Indeed, with the rise in orthorexia – an obsession with eating foods deemed healthy, that can lead to weight loss and nutritional deficiencies – the increased popularity of elimination diets is raising concerns that certain people may take it too far. 'If people are losing too much weight, this may mean they've become too worried or even paranoid about their diet,' says Wilkinson. Marber agrees. 'Fifteen years ago, if someone spoke about what they ate, or what they cut out and counted calories all the time, it would be called disordered eating, now it's becoming standard in certain societies.'

Could 'free-from' diets even lead you to become deficient in vital nutrients? 'It's important to remember that foods such as dairy are an important and easily absorbable source of valuable nutrients such as calcium,' warns Marber. Many gluten-free foods are also not enriched or fortified with nutrients such as folic acid and iron, which can often be found in their gluten-rich counterparts.

Balance your 'free-from' diet carefully – swap the foods you're eliminating with other healthy ingredients – and deficiencies shouldn't be a problem, says Wilkinson. 'Dark, leafy vegetables are a good source of calcium,' she says. But if your health and wellbeing doesn't suffer, your purse will – free-from foods are significantly more expensive than regular foods. 'As well as wasting a lot of energy excluding dairy and gluten, you'll be paying a lot more – free-from products are three to four times more expensive,' says Marber.

## A GROWING BACKLASH?

As much as we're in the grip of 'free-from' fever, a backlash against needless elimination dieting seems to be growing. A #GirlsWithGluten hashtag is taking over social media, with thousands of women posing with their favourite gluten-filled treats. Actress Jennifer Lawrence called gluten-free diets the 'new, cool eating disorder' and the 'basically-I-don't-eat-carbs diet.' In the US, where 'free-from' is a multi-billion-dollar industry, experts and mainstream news outlets are addressing the problems of elimination diets. This renewed media focus reaffirms intolerances and allergies shouldn't be taken lightly. 'If you have a problem, take it seriously and invest in it,' says Marber. ■

## THE RULES

**Thinking of going 'free from'? Follow these do's and don'ts from independent nutritional therapist, Ian Marber.**

- 1. GO QUALIFIED** 'Think about who's actually diagnosing you – a trained doctor and nutritionist or someone with little, to no, experience?' Ask the nutritionist if they're on the UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists.
- 2. EDUCATE YOURSELF** [If you're diagnosed with an allergy] 'Get clued up on your allergy, what it means, how it works and where the element is found.'
- 3. DON'T SCRIMP ON AN EXPERT** 'It's a one-off investment, it's your health and you have to be prepared to pay for it.'
- 4. DON'T GO IT ALONE** 'A nutritionist or dietician can help come up with a diet plan.'
- 5. LOOK AT THE LABEL** 'If you have a genuine intolerance, you shouldn't avoid free-from products, but they aren't always healthy and are sometimes crammed with sugar, unhealthy fats or unnecessary additives.'

## I HAVE COELIAC DISEASE

'I've been allergic to peanuts and shellfish since birth and wasn't diagnosed as coeliac until I was 12. Initially they didn't know it was gluten that was making me ill, so I just presumed I was destined to feel very unwell and tired forever. Then I had mercury poisoning and was allergic to pretty much everything, which was really depressing. Five years ago, I stopped eating the food that was making me really ill. I now live on a 'free from'-style plan, eliminating food containing gluten, dairy, pepper and celery.' Jameela Jamil, TV and radio broadcaster, and ambassador of Holland & Barrett's new Free From range ([hollandandbarrett.com](http://hollandandbarrett.com)).



## FREE-FROM SAVIOURS

If you're planning on following an elimination diet, try these to make life a little easier

**The Food Maestro App,** free; FoodMaestro.me  
This new app is set to transform the way that allergy and intolerance sufferers shop for food, helping them to live more freely. Simply scan foods using your smartphone and FoodMaestro detects if they contain ingredients you're allergic to. Easy!

**Deliciously Dairy Free** by Lesley Waters  
Octopus Publishing, £20  
Waters offers more than 100 delicious, nutritious lactose-free recipes, including White Bean Creamy Hummus with Broad Bean Salad; and Dukkah and Coconut Rice Pudding with Griddled Pineapple, so you don't have to feel you're missing out.

**ProVen Adult Probiotic Acidophilus and Bifidus 25 Billion,** £13.95;  
[provenprobiotics.co.uk](http://provenprobiotics.co.uk)  
Loaded with friendly bacteria, these gluten- and dairy-free probiotics have been proven to alleviate the severity of coeliac disease and boost your digestive and immune health. They also provide some nutrients.



# THE FIT WOMAN'S diet experiment

Tempted to go paleo or vegan? Fitness fanatic Alice Morrison trials three diets to find out which one is best for training and weight loss

**Y**our body is a fantastic fat-retention machine. You've trained it to be totally efficient on energy. Not what you want to hear when you're trying to shift those last few pounds. I'm talking to a coach on a fitness retreat, and she's pointing out that because my exercise preference is for long, slow, endurance events (I've run the Marathon Des Sables – six marathons back to back through the Sahara – and completed the 8,000-mile Tour D'Afrique bike race), my body has adapted and burns fat slowly to keep my energy going. Being over 35, an 'apple' shape and having a taste for sweet things, aren't helping either. I gained weight when I stopped training as hard as I used to, and now need to lose a stone and a half. Like most people, I don't like dieting and, as I do a lot of tough endurance exercise, I need sustained energy. So I decided to research different dietary regimes – testing three methods for one month each, back to back. Scouring through health magazines, three stood out: paleo, vegan and calorie counting. I had two goals: to lose some weight and to discover which diet suited me best for fitness and sport.



Alice running the Marathon des Sables



Refuelling with a vegan fruit salad



Paleo-style eggs for breakfast



Weighing in on the calorie-counting diet





## MONTH ONE

# PALEO DIET

**THE** paleo diet is based on the premise that human beings were at their physical peak when they were hunter gatherers. In order to re-attain that state, paleo proponents believe you should only eat food that you could have hunter-gathered. That means nothing processed, such as wheat, grains, pulses or sugar. It also means no dairy. You're restricted to the foods your hunter-gatherer forebears may have been able to get their hands on. What's not to like? I can eat as much meat, fruit, eggs, veg, nuts and seeds as I like. Sugar isn't a problem because I can eat fruit. What's more, my regular diet is already pretty protein rich, so I think I'm going to enjoy this one. The only slight fly in the ointment is that I like to start my day with porridge. I'm Scottish and consider it our finest dish.

My first few days go well. I eat lots of eggs for breakfast, chicken and veg for lunch and dinner and snack on nuts and dates. It's simple – all you have to do is cut out pulses, grain and dairy. I also find it's quite an easy diet to stick to when eating out, as there's always

something on the menu you can have. The first week is amazing and I lose 6lbs. I feel fine and dandy and am already decided that this is the one for me.

## HUNGER PANGS

Then, in the second week, I get hungry. No matter how much I eat, I'm still hungry. I need a starchy carb. My energy levels dip and by the time I get to 5.30pm every evening, my flatmates tell me I am 'cranky. Very cranky'. I hit a bump in the road in terms of weight loss, too, as I only lose half a pound in a week. How can that be, when I'm denying myself so many things that I've suddenly developed a real craving for. The answer is I eat too many nuts. They seem to approximate starchy carbs and I conveniently forget they're stuffed full of calories. I'm also overdosing on fruit. My digestion has become sluggish and I'm not going to the bathroom regularly. Too much protein, I guess. Diana Green, nutritionist from [epicrunning.co.uk](http://epicrunning.co.uk) tells me why. 'Our ancestors ate large volumes of fibrous plant foods. However, as most people aren't used to this, the modern paleo diet can be lacking in fibre. This can result in poor digestive function, which has an impact on overall health.'

'The first week is amazing and I lose 6lbs. I feel fine and dandy and have already decided this is the one for me'

of the race arrives and instead of a big plate of oatmeal with honey and seeds and nuts, I have an almond flour pancake with two eggs. This is a disaster. It sits on my stomach like an iron weight and I get my worst time ever that day. I also feel completely without strength. Paleo for runners? Maybe for some, but clearly not for me.

## LOW RESERVES

Meanwhile, on the exercise front, I'm training for a half marathon at the end of this month. It isn't going well. I feel dull and powerless. I can't seem to draw on any reserves when I get up for my morning session. I don't have any big dips during the day – no afternoon slump – but I also just don't have enough energy to get me really going. The morning

### PALEO A TYPICAL DAY

- Breakfast: two-egg omelette
- Lunch: chicken salad
- Dinner: steak and vegetables
- Snacks: fruit, nuts, seeds

#### End-of-month results

- 11 lb weight loss
- Steady energy throughout the day with a low point around 5.30pm
- Poor running performance
- Poor digestion



# CALORIE COUNTING

**YES!** After the denial of paleo, I can eat anything I want, within reason. I'm on a 1,200 calorie count. This month, I'm also doing the Run Until You Drop (RUYD) challenge which means I have to run/walk the number of miles in each calendar day for a month – one mile on the first, 10 on the 10th, 27 on the 27th. You get the idea.

Thank goodness for apps and the internet – calorie counting has never been so easy. It's a bit finicky having to weigh everything, but the good thing is that you can then use that recipe again. Yes, I do have porridge on the first morning of the new month – 236 calories worth.

## ENERGY BOOST

My energy levels go right up and I stop feeling hungry. My digestion kicks back into normal gear. I also get interested in cooking again and dig out my recipes. I'm still eating lots of protein and veg and keeping the sugar low. Nuts are no longer an option as they're too calorie rich, but grains are back. This is just as well, as with the mileage I'm doing, I need those starchy carbs.

Weight loss is steady. A pound on the first week and two and a half in the second. By week three, I'm getting a bit irritated with the counting.

I've also had to up my calories because of the RUYD challenge.

When you're doing over 10 miles a day, 1,200 calories is not enough. My energy levels are still high in terms of food, but the miles are beginning to take their toll on my feet and legs. It's lucky that ibuprofen doesn't have many calories because I'm virtually mainlining it.

'I don't feel hungry as I've upped my calorie intake to balance the amount I exercise. Also, exercise acts as an appetite suppressant'

This week, I'm doing 76 miles. It's a lot and I need the fuel. The only thing I can face in the middle of the day is sweet potato wedges roasted in coconut oil with a yoghurt and chilli dip. The long mileage means my body craves instant fuel which means carbs. Sweet potato is very easy for me to digest and tastes good. I put salt on to replace what I'm losing through sweat, and the fat from the coconut oil and the yoghurt provide reserves for later in the day. I don't feel hungry at all as I've upped my calorie intake to balance

the amount I exercise and also because exercise acts as an appetite suppressant.

I'm splitting my mileage into shifts as it gets longer, so this gives me lots of power for post-lunch runs.

I feel I'm burning every single thing I eat. I'm not going to the bathroom at all at the moment.

## OFF THE WAGON

I get a real shock at the end of the third week when I get on the scales. I'd been so good for five days, then on the last two, a friend came to visit and I ate ice cream and cake. The result? Even though I ran/walked 76 miles that week and dieted for five of seven days, I haven't lost an ounce. It highlights the main problem of calorie counting. It's too easy to cheat.

As we all know, dieting is a head game. 'The key is to reduce a sense of being deprived,' says Tanya Woolf, consultant counselling psychologist at Efficacy. 'For some, it will be easier to have occasional treats. For others, with obsessive or addictive-type behaviours, it may feel easier to cut something out completely.'

## CALORIE COUNTING A TYPICAL LUNCH

- 50g brown rice = 56 cals
- 51g of broccoli = 18 cals
- 49g of carrot = 20 cals
- 77g of courgette = 13 cals
- 76g of chicken = 90 cals
- 1 tsp of oil = 40 cals

**TOTAL = 237 cals**

## End-of-month results

- 7.7lb weight loss
- Steady energy throughout the day but needed starchy carbs for running
- Had to increase calorie count to maintain good running performance from 1,200 up to 1,800 per day
- Initially good digestion, became poor by end of the second week



## MONTH THREE

# VEGAN DIET

**VEGAN** is definitely the diet I was most looking forward to. Scott Jurek, a famous ultrarunner hero of mine is a passionate vegan. Also, I love animals, so the thought of being able to look them in the eye with a clear conscience is really appealing. The month begins really well with me cooking at home using lots of fresh fruit and veggies and as many lentils as I can eat. My speciality of stir-fried vegetable rice with walnuts and dates is back on the menu. I take a pound off in the first week.

## STARCH CENTRAL

Week two and I go on a road trip with a friend in Morocco. This is not so good. Most dishes are meat based, so I end up picking vegetables out of tagines and eating an awful lot of bread, crisps and drinking lots of coke to perk up my energy which seems to have slumped. I feel pretty unhealthy and it also makes me a really bad dinner companion. I'm making food choices based on what I can eat rather than on what is healthy, so I can eat bread and jam, but not yoghurt and honey for breakfast, for example. My exercise regime is also totally out the window as I'm walking around a lot but not doing anything structured. Good news, though, my digestion is working overtime and I'm pretty sure I have the healthiest bowels in Europe.

In week three, with all these starchy carbs, I don't feel hungry at all, but I have to say that I also don't feel very healthy.

I am a slug. My energy has gone again and I call my vegan friend,

Cath, who tells me about vitamin B12 (only found in animal sources). I start taking supplements and it seems to help. Then I get 'flu and am stuck in bed for a few days. I can only face eating crisps and bread and drinking coke. It's a catastrophe. The combination of totally unhealthy eating and no exercise at all means I have gained 5lbs this month. Green sums up where I went wrong. 'Complete compliance to a vegan diet means that very careful planning is required to ensure a balanced diet. There can be an over-dependence on refined carbohydrates and sugars, as they are often the only available alternative to meals containing animal protein.'

### VEGAN – A TYPICAL DAY

- Breakfast: bread and jam or porridge with seeds and nuts
- Lunch: rice and vegetable stir-fry
- Dinner: bean tortillas
- Snacks: bread, nuts, seeds, fruit, dark chocolate

### End-of-month results

- 5lb weight gain
- No feelings of hunger
- Energy dipped in week two, returned when took B12
- Potentially good energy for sport, but was unable to test properly
- Excellent digestion

**I** come to the end of my three months with a mixture of relief and regret. It has been a really interesting experiment and given me a sense of purpose and awareness around food. Overall, I lost 13lbs in 13 weeks, which is just about right (guidelines recommend 1-2lbs of weight loss a week). If I'd followed almost any sensible eating plan, I'd have lost the same amount. Each diet had its positive and negative points.

With paleo, it was easy to understand what to eat and what to cut out, so that was a massive bonus psychologically. It absolutely stripped the weight off but I was hungry a lot of the time. I didn't feel good exercising on it and it didn't work in terms of sports performance. I couldn't sustain it long term and I think I was taking on too much protein.

Calorie Counting was definitely the best diet in terms of regular and sustainable weight loss while exercising and having

enough energy to exercise well. The down sides were that I had to be constantly on my guard to count calories and it was easy to cheat or lapse and lose all the progress I'd made. I was also a bit concerned that my weight loss was only 8lbs for that month even though I covered a whopping 406 miles of running and walking with the Run Until You Drop challenge. Admittedly, I had to up my calorie intake, but I was still under the recommended 2,000 a day. Presumably, this is just more proof that my body is indeed a fabulous fat-conserving machine.

Vegan was a fail in terms of weight loss as I actually gained weight on it. However, I don't feel I gave it enough of a chance and would like to try it again, putting in more effort this time. During that month, I had two events that

skewed it. I did a road trip, which meant I couldn't really control what I ate, and then I got 'flu, which knocked me for six. Also, I did barely any exercise – a hangover from my efforts of the month before perhaps, and a result of the trip and the 'flu. I did feel I wasn't getting enough protein on the vegan diet and I developed a massive craving for eggs and cheese, although surprisingly, not for meat.

Going forward, I think the answer for me is to work with calories, but to cut out some high-calorie food groups. It's been three months of effort and there are no easy answers, but definitely more insight into what my body likes and doesn't.

I might also try some high-intensity exercise to see if it speeds up my metabolism and burns more calories. ■

**'Overall, I lost 13lbs in 13 weeks, which is just about right (guidelines recommend 1-2lbs of weight loss a week)'**



# ARE YOU GOING OUT THIS WEEKEND?



Why not join us on a course or holiday and find out how you can use the mountains to keep your mind and body healthy. From hillwalking to rock climbing and kayaking to mountain biking, we have a huge range of weekend breaks to choose from. With hotel standard, en-suite bedrooms, fabulous food and a well stocked bar, you'll go home relaxed and inspired to swap the gym for the outdoors every weekend.



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# Set yourself *FREE!*

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There's nothing like taking your workouts outside for de-stressing and re-energising you. Read our inspirational ideas for motivating you to head out there, expert advice on how to make nature your gym, plus all you need to prepare for a walking challenge.





A group of people are running on a sandy beach. The image is heavily stylized with a large, bright lens flare effect that dominates the right side and top, creating a dreamy, high-contrast atmosphere. The people are in motion, with their legs and arms visible. One person in the foreground is wearing denim shorts and a dark top. Another person behind them is wearing a light-colored, patterned top. The background shows the ocean waves breaking on the shore.

# *GO OUTDOORS!*

Being outside in nature is proven to boost your mood and self-esteem – so head out for some fresh-air fun and reap the benefits

WORDS: Becky Fletcher

There's nothing quite like being outside for the last days of summer. Getting active in the fresh air with friends in stunning surroundings can be the perfect tonic – a University of Michigan study even found that this combination is proven to limit stress and feelings of depression. With this in mind, we've rounded up the best activities for you to do outside over the next few months; and there's something for everyone. Whether you want a scenic cycle route or the latest gear to ensure you stay prepared in all weathers (after all, this is the UK), it's time to embrace the great outdoors!

## Ride happy

Does the idea of cruising from cove to cove along stunning coastline or exploring ancient sites on two wheels tickle your fancy? Take your cycle route to the Welsh borders and beyond with *Lost Lanes Wales* (Wild Things; £14.99) by Jack Thurston, presenter of *The Bike Show*. With 36 specially selected rides – from exploring the Pembrokeshire coast to the ruins of the lower Wye Valley – including routes for families, wild swimming spots, gourmet trips and natural-wonder cycles, plus downloadable directions and maps, there's something for everyone. Happy adventures!

### OFFER

Get 30% per cent off new book *Lost Lanes Wales* (plus free p&p). Head to [wildthingspublishing.com](http://wildthingspublishing.com) and enter 'Health & Fitness' as your coupon code.

## Walk on water

Using exercise mats as fitness equipment is nothing new, but imagine using them on water. Introducing aquabase, a unique way of doing low-impact, cross-training workouts, from HIIT to yoga. Help your posture, identify muscular imbalances and boost your stabilising muscles or speed up your recovery from injury. Expect classes to pop up soon. Head to [aquaphysical.com](http://aquaphysical.com) for details.



## Plan your adventure

Creating trips for everyone from first-timers to seasoned travellers, travel company Live the Adventure ([livetheadventure.co](http://livetheadventure.co)) does exactly what it says on the tin and organises bespoke adventures so you can live them. Whether you're after a mountain biking trip in Bhutan, an action-packed week away, or the chance to climb a Himalayan peak, there's plenty to choose from. Time to tick off some items on your bucket list!

## Cycle smart

Thinking of taking a cycle trip? Commonwealth, Olympic and world road race champion Nicole Cooke offers her top tips, with James Villas Holidays

**1 LOCATION IS KEY:** 'Destinations such as Mallorca and the Algarve have a combination of flat and mountainous terrain within fairly compact areas, giving a range of routes for all abilities.'

**2 PLAN YOUR ROUTE:** 'When devising a route, it's worth considering more flat terrain and using designated bike paths, if they are available, as they will allow you to explore an area without needing to cycle on the roads.'

**3 WHEN RENTING:** 'If you decide to rent a bike, make sure the rental company spends time setting up your riding position so you feel comfortable and confident.'

(Head to James Villas Holidays ([jamesvillas.co.uk](http://jamesvillas.co.uk)) for more cycle trip inspiration and tips.)





## Try a raw retreat

Running on the beach, relaxing by the pool, dining in style with fresh raw meals – sound good? Raw Juice Camp is a pop-up vegan boutique bootcamp set in an impressive villa in an exclusive beachside area on Portugal's Algarve. These high-energy breaks focus on detoxing, fitness, raw foods, bootcamp workouts, yoga, rest and massage and are lots of fun! Prices start at £500 per person for seven nights – visit [exploreraw.com](http://exploreraw.com).

## Girls allowed

On October 4, hundreds of women will descend on London's Hyde Park to take part in the first ever Run with the Girls women's 10K. The route will take you through quiet paths in the Royal Park, past the Serpentine Lake and Long Water. The event has partnered with charity A Mile in Her Shoes ([amileinher shoes.org.uk](http://amileinher shoes.org.uk)), which continues the theme of supporting and encouraging more women to take part in running – whatever their background or ability level. Bra company Less Bounce will be providing prizes for the top three winners and Whole Foods Market, Kensington, will provide goody bags for all participants. To sign up to Run with the Girls as an individual or as a team, visit [runwiththegirls.co.uk](http://runwiththegirls.co.uk). Prices start at £25.



***Soldier on*** The Major Series of trail races, brought to you by British Military Fitness ([britmilfit.com](http://britmilfit.com)), is back for September and October. Held in Warwickshire (Sept 26), Tunbridge Wells (October 3) and Leeds (October 18), the courses are full of fun obstacles, such as paint guns in Reed's Rifle Range and Sander's slippery slide, plus plenty of mud! Prices start at £35.

Fancy training like a Royal Marine Commando? On November 14, Haver castle in Kent hosts The Commando Series, a 6K-course designed to put you through your paces. You'll get to experience the mud, sweat and pain of modern day commando training with 15 obstacles over a wild terrain. On arrival 'recruits' enter the event village, resembling a military encampment, where you change and 'cam up'. Recruits are then led into a holding pen for an old-fashioned warm-up conducted by legendary motivator in chief and ex-Royal Marines physical training instructor, Bart, before getting your official 'orders' to set off around the course. It's open to all ages and abilities. Visit [commandoseries.co.uk](http://commandoseries.co.uk) for registration and more information. Adult prices from £55.



## Clever commutes

If you're one of the many who cycle to and from work, boost your safety with the help of Visijax Commuter Jacket (£99.99; halfords.com). Using motion-sensor technology, it activates an amber light when a cyclist signals to turn. The bright LED lights are switched on via a button on the front and a quick tap puts them on slow, flashing or permanent light mode – easy peasy!

88%

*of cyclists cite saddle comfort as the most important factor when choosing a bike. As well making your ride safe, make it comfortable with Selle Royal Classic Freeway Fit Foam Saddle (£29.99; halfords.com). It moulds to your body and guarantees an even distribution of weight, removing bumps and vibrations in the points of contact and improving blood circulation. As revealed by a YouGov poll.*

## Go night running

**SPOOK YOURSELF:** After a frightfully enjoyable challenge? The Spooky Sprint is just the ticket for some Halloween fitness fun! Dress up and head out for a run in the dark – complete with glow-in-the-dark accessories and a head torch – in Aylesbury (Sept 26), Kent (Oct 17) or Nottingham (Oct 31) – and raise money for charity Parkinson's UK. Prices start at £19 for the 5K distance. Visit parkinsons.org.uk for more info.

**NIGHTTIME JOG:** On November 11, 30 cities worldwide will host an exhilarating Run in the Dark challenge (entry £24.95; runinthedark.org) to help raise money for the Mark Pollock Trust (a spinal cord injury charity). Don your hi-vis and brightest clothes and sign up for an unforgettable evening pounding 5K or 10K of pavements in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, London or Manchester. Get ready to glow!

FujiTrail Pack  
Jacket, £70;  
asics.co.uk

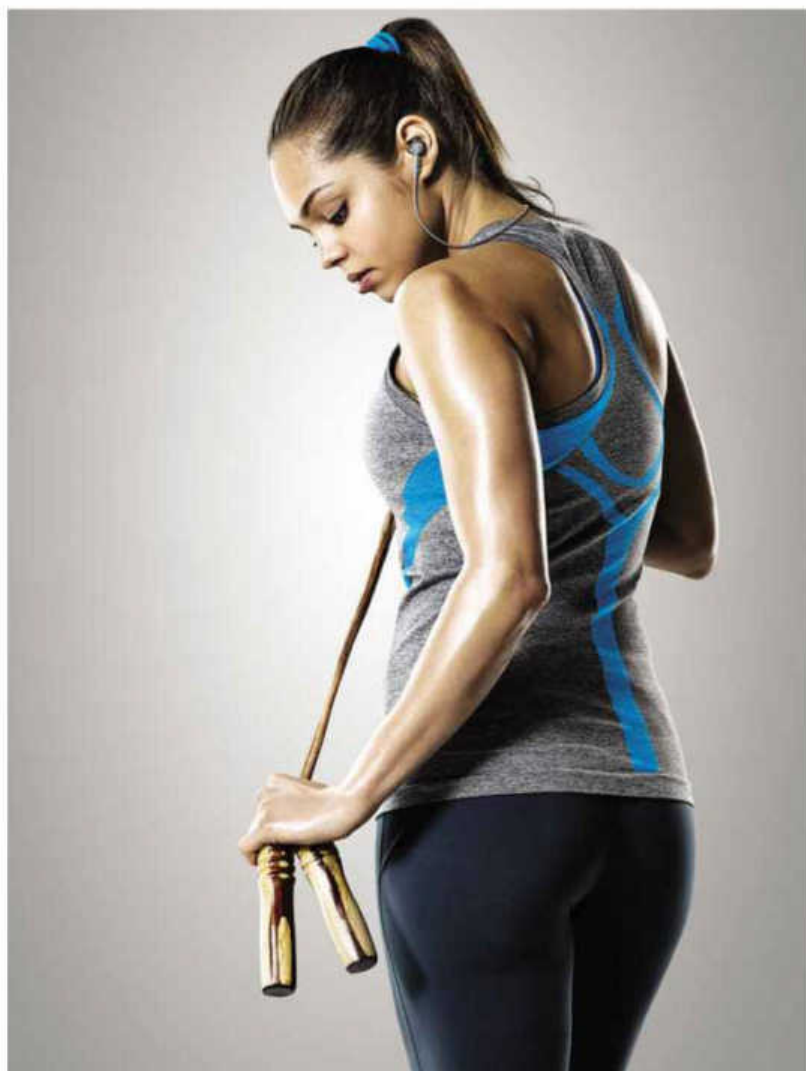


## Beat the elements

Beat any unexpected downpours or strong winds when you're outside with one of Asics's lightweight jackets. The FujiTrail Pack Jacket, left, (£70; asics.co.uk) is easily packed away in a fist-sized bundle and is made from Ripstop fabric to make braving the elements, and staying dry, even easier.

## Your new coaching tool

Plan, track and analyse any outdoor workout at the touch of a button with these Jabra Sports Coach Wireless headphones (£119.99; argos.co.uk). They can create customised workouts and in-ear coaching based on more than 40 different exercises, when used with the Jabra Sport Life app.





## Outdoor spa indulgence

With far-reaching views of the surf at Cornwall's Mawgan Porth Beach, the Scarlet Spa ([scarlethotel.co.uk](http://scarlethotel.co.uk)) is an oasis of calm. Alongside many indoor facilities (luxury tented treatment rooms and cocoon-like pods for you to relax post-treatment), there's an incredibly tranquil cliff-top hot tub and a natural reed-bed swimming pool. Day guests are more than welcome at the spa, but why not make the most of your gorgeous Cornish surroundings with a night at The Scarlet? Sounds dreamy! B&B starts from £210 pp; the new 3-night yoga break starts from £760 pp, based on two sharing a Just Right room.

## Walk the walk

If running or cycling isn't your thing, how about signing up your family (including dog!) for the Alzheimer's Society's flagship fundraising event, Memory Walk, taking place across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The walk distances vary (from 2-10K), depending on location. It's easy to be a part of the challenge, set to attract 47,000 walkers and raise over £3.2 million for charity. Head to [memorywalk.org](http://memorywalk.org) to find out more. The suggested amount to raise is £100, plus £5 registration fee.



## High-fashion adventure

Mixing razor-sharp technology and intelligent layering with a collection of striking pieces, Adidas by Stella McCartney's A/W 2015 range is a great way to give your autumn wardrobe a fashionable boost. Boasting technical credentials to rival all great running shoes, the Ultra Boost Run shoe (£130; [adidas.co.uk](http://adidas.co.uk)) comes in a seasonal palette of Dark Wine, Pomegranate and Flight Blue alongside Firethorn, Bold Onyx and Yellow Cab. The new Studio Parka (£300; [adidas.co.uk](http://adidas.co.uk)), with its adjustable waist belt, features Climastorm® technology that offers breathability and wind resistance, perfect for changeable weather conditions – the floral jacquard design is inspired by Stella's own ready-to-wear collection. The collection also includes houndstooth wool seamless long-sleeve tees, running accessories and winter boots, to name a few items.



## Be a Spartan!

The popularity of obstacle races shows little sign of slowing down, with 10 million people across the globe taking part annually. Whether you're an elite athlete or just after your first challenge, Reebok Spartan Race packs an action-packed punch. Choose from a 5K 'sprint', 13K 'super' or 20K 'beast' distance that will see you doing everything from scaling walls to crawling through muddy pits. September 19 sees the South Sprint at Ashburnham Place, East Sussex. Visit [spartanraceuk.uk](http://spartanraceuk.uk) for other venues and more info. Prices start from £64.

## *Lend a hand*

The wealth of benefits you get from volunteering are numerous, and some of the most successful British athletes, such as Baroness Grey-Thompson (Tanni) and Jo Pavey, credit their success to the help of volunteers. Whether you're inspired, injured or just fancy sitting out a challenge, Join In is a London 2012 legacy charity that puts more volunteers into community sport. With events up and down the country, they've got plenty of opportunity for you to help out – the Richmond Running Festival and Aviva Women's Tour cycling race are just two of the many outdoor events that need you over the next couple of months. Head to [joininuk.org](http://joininuk.org) for more details on the projects that need you!

## *Light up*

Paying homage to its Norwegian heritage by combining fashionable Scandinavian design with comfort, performance and safety, Helly Hansen's A/W 2015 collection has hidden reflectivity that's revealed when exposed to light. We love this Aspire Norviz top (£75; [hellyhansen.com](http://hellyhansen.com)). The training shirt reflects light, while the X-Cool quick-dry fabric keeps you cool, however hard you're working.

**We love the invisible reflectivity in Helly Hansen's training shirt**



## *Family waterpark fun*

For a hilarious, *Total Wipeout*-style (or *It's a Knockout* for the oldies among us) family frolic, try Witbit Sports Aqua Park, near Fordingbridge in Hampshire's New Forest – it's the first of its kind to hit the UK. With two trampolines, flippers, slides, hurdles, rockers, rollers, an overhang climbing wall, a swing and a giant iceberg in the 40m-long inflatable structure, the aqua assault course will provide plenty of watery fun for all the family (aged six and over) until the end of September. A one-hour session costs £15 (plus £5 for wetsuit hire). You can also try your hand at wakeboarding, with facilities for beginners to advanced. Why not pitch your tent in the site's campsite and hang out for a few days? Head to [newforestwaterpark.co.uk](http://newforestwaterpark.co.uk) for more information. ■







# MAKE NATURE

## *YOUR GYM!*

Want to escape the stuffy gym? Slim down, sculpt all over and soak up the sun with our essential alfresco training advice WORDS: Sarah Ivory

**T**hink back to your last outdoor workout – how did it make you feel? Happy? Energised? De-stressed? The chances are it made you feel all these things and more, according to the latest data, which shows that exercising in the open air is a boon to our health. The powers of green exercise are so impressive that research in the *Journal of Physical Activity & Health* shows women who train outside are 28 per cent less likely to feel depressed than those who train inside. And the same study reports that women who do some of their workouts outdoors log over twice as much exercise as those who stick to an indoor-only workout plan. But perhaps the biggest contribution outdoor exercise can make to your health and wellbeing is the overall positive effect it has on energy levels. One review reveals that, compared to exercising indoors, exercising in a natural environment is linked to greater feelings of revitalisation, happiness and vitality; another study shows that being in the outdoors can make you feel more enthusiastic, alive and energised. The benefits are big, and the best bit is that outdoor activity is free to do!





Why working up a sweat in the open air makes us feel so great is thought to be in part down to something called biophilia – a theory that suggests we humans are hard-wired to want contact with the natural environment. The biophilia hypothesis reports that contact with nature is a basic human need, and we respond positively to being outdoors because of it. Many believe that our need for nature goes back to the dark ages, when natural landscape provided the resources – water, sunlight, food – necessary for survival. Further research suggests that natural scenes and being out among nature can evoke positive memories and happy emotions from days past. Whatever the reason for the feel-good kick that Mother Nature provides, experts agree that we humans still harbour a desire to be at one with nature – and it's a no-brainer that exercising outside in the summer will make us feel good.

## NO RESTRICTIONS

And there are other perks – outdoor exercise can work to your timetable. The great outdoors is always there waiting for you morning, noon, day or night. The biggest plus is that the outdoors is a place where being active is likely and exercise is easy to carry out, which is part of the reason why it's such an attractive workout option. 'It's far more motivating than being in a gym because you haven't got

timetable restrictions so you can always fit an outdoor workout into your schedule,' agrees Jacqui Cleaver, trainer at New You Bootcamp ([newyoubootcamp.com](http://newyoubootcamp.com)). 'As a

bonus, outdoor activity is also a great way to get your fill of vitamin D, the "happy vitamin"!' Indeed, whether you cycle to work, walk to the station or go for a run in your lunch hour, it's simple to squeeze an outdoor session into even the busiest day. So, what's your excuse for skipping a workout now?

## THE GREEN GYM

Clearly, exercising among nature is good news for our bodies, minds and souls but, for many of us, knowing what to do in the great outdoors is the stumbling block. Running, walking and cycling are fantastic options, but the green gym has a lot more to offer than basic cardiovascular activity. 'Use the outdoor environment and everything that it has to give,' advises Cleaver. 'Do push-ups and ab work on the ground, using your own weight for resistance. Try quick sprints on the paths, or triceps dips on the park bench or a big log. Squats and lunges are possible as well.' The trick is to keep it simple. The beauty of outdoor training is that you don't need any kit or a lot of exercise know-how,

so don't over-complicate things by trying to do too much, too soon. A simple workout might consist of a circuit of five exercises – it needn't be any more complex than that.

Scared to give it a go? Despite its association with military-style fitness, outdoor training isn't only

for workout pros. In fact, it's perfect for fitness newbies who don't want to splash out on a 'get fit' regime. 'For those who are just beginning their workout journey, going



to the gym can be daunting,' explains Jacqui, 'Outdoor training allows you to start your training regime without being under the gym microscope.' And for those of you who are already fit, exercising outside is a great way to mix up your routine to keep reaping results – it's the perfect antidote to a gym schedule that's gone a little stale over winter. Sign up to one of the many outdoor workout programmes or try creating your own using our advice below. It's time to get outside!

## 4 OUTDOOR TRAINING WORKOUTS

### EQUINOX TRAINING CAMP (ETC)

[equinox.com](http://equinox.com)

A very specialised bootcamp, ETC has been created by a team of physiologists, trainers, instructors and the Equinox Health Advisory board. Expect an 18-session programme that gets progressively tougher to ensure results.

### FITNESS FIRST OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING (OGT)

[fitnessfirst.co.uk](http://fitnessfirst.co.uk)

Sign up to this outdoor training programme at select Fitness First clubs across the UK. The 30-, 45- or 60-minute workouts are broken down into five classes: HIIT, Circuits, Train and Run, Teamwork and Cardio Breakout, so take your pick!

### BRITISH MILITARY FITNESS

[britmilfit.com](http://britmilfit.com)

This popular outdoor fitness company runs over 400 classes a week in more than 140 venues across the country. Led by military-trained professionals, the workouts are varied and fun. Expect bodyweight moves, partner exercises and team games.

### NEW YOU BOOT CAMP FITNESS DAYS

[newyoubootcamp.com](http://newyoubootcamp.com)

Head to Richmond Park in London for one of New You Boot Camp's monthly fitness days. You'll learn all about physical training outside and how to fuse bootcamp-style training into your life. Suitable for all levels, from beginner to advanced.



## RESULTS



### **MOSTLY As** **YOU'RE A PERFORMANCE PRO**

Keep fit? Stay healthy? Pah! You're in it for the sense of achievement that you get when you cross the finish-line. Whether you're going for gold or aiming to beat your own PB (personal best), your workout motivation gets a huge hit of adrenaline when there's a challenge involved.

**TRY:** Marathons, triathlons, cycling sportives.



### **MOSTLY Bs** **YOU'RE A MULTI TASKER**

You like to have your training straight up with a hit of high-intensity, body-boosting results, such as improved strength, greater cardio fitness and maximum calorie burn. Not content with being fast or fit, you want to train to be strong, agile and flexible as well. And what's more, you want your friends with you while you do it.

**TRY:** Bootcamps, obstacle course racing, mud runs.



### **MOSTLY Cs** **YOU'RE A TRAIL BLAZER**

Whether running, hiking or biking, you love to head off the beaten track. Your idea of a good workout involves exploring the wild

outdoors and conquering any hurdle that Mother Nature throws at you – rocks, mud, hills. You might exercise alone, or you might hit the trails with friends, but one thing's for sure – you choose the woods and mountains over roads and parks every time!

**TRY:** Fell running, mountain biking, mountaineering.



### **MOSTLY Ds** **YOU'RE AN URBANITE**

Exercise for you is about self-discovery, growth and development. But you don't need wild mountains and untouched trails to hit your goals – you've got everything you need on the streets of your home town. From pacing the pavements, to jumping over walls or sprinting up stairs, the space outside your door has it all.

**TRY:** Parkour, urban orienteering, urban hiking.



### **MOSTLY Es** **YOU'RE A TEAM PLAYER**

Sport is your number one motivation. Whether you compete as a solo player or part of a team, you love playing games to keep fit. Sports are super-social and give you the chance to hone a bunch of skills – agility, power, speed and strength. Plus, hey, games are fun!

**TRY:** Tennis, football, Ultimate Frisbee.

## WHAT OUTDOOR TRIBE DO YOU BELONG TO?

### 1 WHAT ARE YOUR WORKOUT GOALS?

**A** Performance:

*I'm training for a race*

**B** Shape-up:

*I'd like to get stronger  
and slimmer*

**C** Enjoyment:

*I want to have fun off the  
beaten track*

**D** Aimless:

*I have lots of energy to  
burn!*

**E** Social:

*I want to beat my buddy in  
a match*

### 2 WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO WORK OUT?

**A** On a long, flat road  
where I can gather speed

**B** In an upbeat atmosphere  
with other exercisers

**C** Somewhere wild, rugged  
and beautiful

**D** On city roads, parks  
and streets

**E** On the court or pitch

### 3 WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS YOUR TYPE OF SWEAT SESSION?

**A** Timed sprints

**B** A bodyweight HIIT-  
style workout

**C** Fartlek training

**D** A crazy obstacle course

**E** Drills sessions or skill-  
based games

### 4 WHAT MAKES A GOOD WORKOUT?

**A** The competition aspect

**B** The social side

**C** Getting close to nature

**D** Boosting my athleticism

**E** Increasing my skill

### 5 WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO KEEP FIT?

**A** A place on the podium

**B** Spending time with other  
people

**C** The sense of freedom

**D** Conquering my fears

**E** My team or club





# CREATE YOUR OWN WORKOUT

Want to craft a personal outdoor workout plan? Here's how to be your own PT!

## 1 DO AN ASSESSMENT

Whether your chosen outdoor venue is a park, the roads or your garden, start creating your workout by assessing the area. What outdoor tools do you have at your disposal? Perhaps there are hills, paths or circular loops for running intervals. Maybe there are benches or low walls for step-ups, dips and incline/decline push-ups. A high wall is great for squat holds and wall walks. If you're really lucky, you might have access to monkey bars, swings or pull-up bars. Hey, who said that playgrounds are just for kids?

## 2 CREATE A GOAL

What do you want to get out of your outdoor workouts? Decide on a primary goal – it might be to lose weight, boost endurance or gain strength. If your aim is weight loss, do high-intensity moves for short periods of time with little rest between sets – circuits of squat jumps, sprints and pull-ups are great. If your goal is to build endurance, select moderate-intensity moves that you can perform for a lot of reps – try circuits of longer running intervals, skipping, rows or lunges. If you want to gain muscle definition, consider isolating body parts and choosing multiple moves that focus on the same muscle group – so, you might do an upper-body workout one day, a lower-body workout another day and a core workout on the final day.

## 3 CHOOSE YOUR MOVES

Once you've decided on a workout goal, it's time to choose the exercises that you want to do. For full-body workouts, aim to include a push exercise (push-up, decline push-up, incline push-up), pull exercise (body rows, pull-ups, chin-ups); lower-body move (squat, lunge, step-up) and core exercises (v-sits, crunches, scissor legs). Upper-body workouts should always include push and pull moves. Keep it simple by choosing five to six moves and performing three to four sets or circuits of all the exercises. It doesn't have to be complicated.



## USEFUL TRAINING METHODS

### AMRAP

*(As many rounds as possible)*  
Set a stopwatch to a specific time, such as five minutes, and perform as many circuits of your chosen exercises as possible before the time is up.

### TABATA

Do each exercise at maximum intensity for 20 seconds and then rest for 10 seconds between moves.

### EMOM

*(Every minute on the minute)*  
Do your exercises alternately on the minute for a set number of minutes. For example, 'EMOM for 10 minutes of five box jumps and burpees' means do five box jumps during the first minute, five burpees during the second minute, five box jumps during the third minute and continue alternating for 10 minutes.

## 4 PICK A METHOD

Got your moves? Now, how are you going to perform them? Think again about your goal, as this will help you choose a method. Circuit-style sessions are great for all because you can tailor the rest, reps or total time to suit your goal. Super-sets (performing two moves that target the same muscle group back-to-back, such as bench dips and diamond push-ups or wall sits and step-ups) are great for lean muscle gains. You could do three different super-sets, such as three to four sets of triceps dips and diamond push-ups, three to four sets of incline and decline push-ups, and three to four sets of pull-ups and body rows. Want to rev up your heart rate? Try high-intensity methods such as Tabata, AMRAP or EMOM (see box, left).

## 5 STICK TO PROTOCOL

Warming up and cooling down are important stages of any workout, and this goes for outdoor sessions too! Try warming up the muscles you're about to use by doing gentle versions of the set exercises. Follow this with a pulse-raising exercise such as high knees, skipping or jogging. Don't forget to stretch after the session, too...

# TYRE FUN!

Got a spare van tyre lying around? Great! Flipping, pulling and pushing tyres burns calories and builds lean muscle. Try this workout



## TYRE FLIP

**REPS: 20**

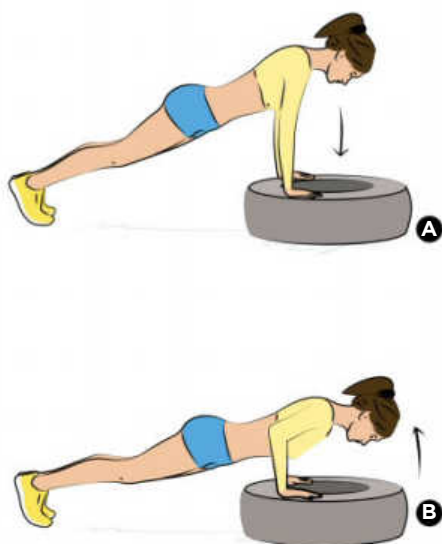
Stand facing the tyre with your feet a bit wider than hip-width apart. Shift your hips back and squat down as far as you can, keeping your chest lifted and extending your arms between your feet. Slide your hands under the tyre, then push through your heels to rise up out of the squat, flipping the tyre up and over as you do so. Shuffle forward, drop down; repeat. Try to do it fast.



## POWER SQUAT

**REPS: 20**

Start with your feet hip-width apart inside the tyre and drop down into a squat, keeping the weight through your heels and chest lifted (A). Push down through your heels to explode up into the air. While jumping, widen your stance and land your feet on opposite sides of the tyre rim, with soft knees (B). Step back down into the tyre and repeat.



## INCLINE PUSH-UP

**REPS: 12-15**

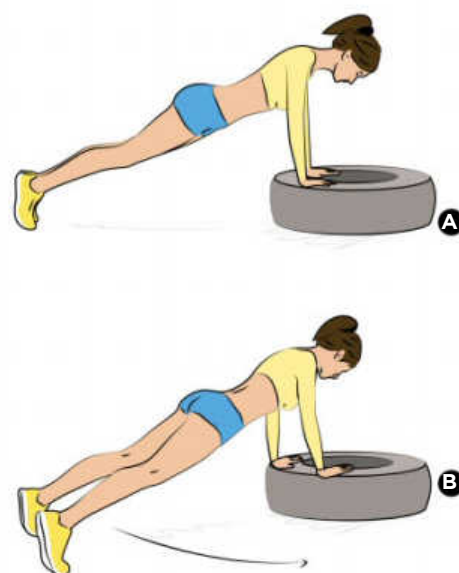
Crouch facing the tyre and place your hands on it shoulder-width apart. Extend both legs behind you, creating a high push-up position (A). Engage your abs and bend your elbows to lower your chest towards the tyre (B). When your elbows are at 90°, squeeze your chest to push back up to the start. Keep your core muscles engaged throughout, and a straight line between your shoulders and ankles.



## TYRE PULL

**REPS: 20**

Wrap a resistance trainer around your tyre (try Fitness Mad Safety Resistance Trainer, £16.99; fitness-mad.com). Loop one end of the band around the other, as if you were tying a knot. Hold a handle in each hand, palms facing in. Walk backwards until your arms are extended and the trainer's taut. Drop into a semi squat and row the tyre towards you by pulling the handles into your chest. Walk back again and repeat.




## ROTATING PLANK

**REPS: 2**

Crouch facing the tyre and place your hands on it shoulder-width apart. Extend both legs behind you into a high plank position (A). Engage your abs and, simultaneously, step your right foot and right hand round to the right. Bring the left foot and left hand in to meet them (B). Repeat until you've travelled around the full rim of the tyre. That's one rep. Now, go back the other way in a full circle. ■





# STEP IT UP

Looking for an endurance challenge but loathe running, swimming and cycling? Then boost your stamina, strength and all-round fitness by training for a long-distance walk!

WORDS: Sarah Ivory

**W**alking – the very word doesn't sound tough enough for fitness fans such as you and I. Walking between 13.1 and 26.2 miles? Sure,

that gets your attention! Unlike taking the stairs, walking the dog or strolling to the shops, full- and half-marathon hikes have all the attributes of a challenge – they require dedicated training, the use of muscles you didn't know existed and a mind so stubborn that quitting isn't an option, even if you've been on your feet for 11 hours! 'But you don't have to be on a military-style yomp for walking to be an effective activity,' says Dean Hodgkin, fitness expert at Ragdale Hall ([deanhodgkin.com](http://deanhodgkin.com)).

This perhaps explains why the UK is going gaga for mass-participation walking events, so much so that data shows over 350,000 people have taken part in Walk the Walk events and 17,000 walkers will be completing the half- or full-marathon Shine Night Walk this September ([cancerresearchuk.org](http://cancerresearchuk.org)).

Is it a surprise that the popularity of long-distance walking challenges is on the increase? No, not really. The benefits of signing up to a walking challenge are big – data shows that just three hours of walking each week could reduce the risk of heart attack by 35 per cent, while another study from the University of Massachusetts Medical School in the US shows that walking for a mere 45 minutes four times a week for a year could result in an impressive fat loss of 18lbs. And then there's the cardiovascular, strength and mental fortitude benefits walkers reap when completing a long-distance hike. 'The facts supporting the weight-loss and health benefits of

walking make impressive reading,' says Hodgkin. 'So you can rest assured this isn't another exercise gimmick that falsely promises fantastic results. Walking is a credible activity that will work for you.'

Think it sounds easy? Here's the thing – walking doesn't have to be a gentle activity. It might not boast the physical intensity of a long-distance run, but power walking 13.1 miles and beyond burns just as many calories as running the mileage, plus you'll need a serious amount of stamina and willpower to stay on your feet for so long! Fancy signing up for a challenge? Simon Barnett, director of walking development at the walking charity Ramblers ([ramblers.org.uk](http://ramblers.org.uk)), reveals everything you need to know about training for a long-distance walk.

## 1 KEEP IT FRESH

Marathoners wouldn't dream of hitting the roads to do the same old session four to five times a week. They mix it up with interval workouts, long-distance jaunts and tempo runs. Take a leaf out of their book and keep your walks varied. 'Alternate between doing long-distance walks and high-speed, short walks, and train on different terrain,' says Barnett. 'Your body gets used to the same motions and stops reaping fitness gains – keep motivation high by switching training sessions.'

## 2 KIT IT OUT

Walking 101 – get a comfy pair of cushioned trainers. And that's not all – for long-distance walking, you need to make sure the rest of your gear is up to the job, too. 'From top to toe, make sure your hat, shirt, underwear, trousers and socks do not chafe after being worn for hours,' says Barnett. And it's equally important to road-test your shoes. 'Break in new shoes for at least three months before your walking event. Your feet get bigger when you walk all day, so make



## TRY THIS!

### **The Shine Night Walk**

September 26

[shinewalk.org](http://shinewalk.org)

Cancer Research UK's night-time fundraising half- and full-marathon walks will start at 7:30pm. Walkers illuminate the streets with lights, glow sticks and sparkling clothing!

### **The MoonWalk New York**

October 3

[walkthewalkamerica.org](http://walkthewalkamerica.org)

Take your challenge overseas by signing up for this marathon-distance event in the Big Apple. Show your support for breast cancer awareness by wearing the trademark decorated bra as you take in the sights.

### **The Ovarian Cancer Walk**

October 17

[targetovariancancer.org.uk](http://targetovariancancer.org.uk)

If a half or full marathon seems like an incredibly long way, sign up for this 5K or 10K walk around London's 2012 Olympic park. It'll be great for your fitness and even more positive for the research towards ovarian cancer.

### **High Peak Winter Hike**

November 15

[bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

Hike through some of Derbyshire's most stunning countryside on this 17-mile winter trek. The linear walk takes place on challenging terrain that follows the route of the former Cromford and High Peak Railway.



# TRAINING PLAN

Want to complete a half-marathon walk?

This schedule by celebrity trainer Matt Roberts ([mattroberts.co.uk](http://mattroberts.co.uk)) is designed to boost your strength and stamina. 'It's great for motivation and confidence, especially if you haven't taken part in this sort of event before,' says Roberts. Don't skip the recovery weeks – you'll need them!

## ESSENTIAL SESSIONS

**STRENGTH TRAINING** A full-body strength workout will help stabilise your joints and keep your body efficient over longer distances. It also helps prevent injury in endurance events. Try step-ups, walking lunges and squats. Mobility work means dynamic stretching, such as high knees and squats.

**ENDURANCE WALKS** Great for stamina, these increasingly long walks on Saturdays will ensure you get used to spending miles on your legs and build a great foundation of fitness.

**HILL WALKS** Your Thursday workout, where you walk up- and downhill, will challenge different energy systems to the long-duration treks, plus it'll help improve your leg speed during your walks. 'Light' means go at a slower speed or choose a more gradual incline.



PHOTOGRAPHY: Thinkstock

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	Walk 30 mins	Walk 30 mins	Hill walks (20 mins)	Strength train	Walk 3 miles
2	Walk 35 mins	Walk 35 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 4 miles
3	Walk 40 mins	Walk 40 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 5 miles
4	Walk 45 mins	Walk 45 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 6 miles
5	Walk 50 mins	Walk 50 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 7 miles
6 (RW*)	Walk 30 mins	Walk 30 mins	Hill walks (light)	Mobility work	Walk 4 miles
7	Walk 55 mins	Walk 55 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 9 miles
8	Walk 60 mins	Walk 60 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 10 miles
9	Walk 65 mins	Walk 65 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 11 miles
10	Walk 65 mins	Walk 65 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 12 miles
11	Walk 1 hr 10 mins	Walk 1 hr 10 mins	Hill walks	Strength train	Walk 13 miles
12 (RW)	Walk 30 mins	Walk 30 mins	Hill walks (light)	Mobility work	Walk 4 miles

\*(RW: Rest week) Wednesday and Sunday are full rest days

sure you choose shoes that have some spreading room.' Got it?

### 3 RESEARCH YOUR ROUTES

Finding a long-distance route in your area can be tough, but there are plenty of online resources that make it easier. 'Look for sites that provide instant training routes on paths that are scenic, effective, safe and accessible,' recommends Barnett. 'The Ramblers website, for example, contains an online library of over 2,500 routes, which all have detailed and printable Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, elevation information and written directions to ensure you stay on track.' It also pays to join a walking group in your area where you can glean tips from experienced hikers and make training friends.

### 4 MAKE IT SIMPLE

It's stating the obvious, but you can't walk 13.1 miles or more off the cuff. You need to train for that sort of feat! 'It's important to enjoy your walks and not push your body too hard, so the best approach is to start slowly and steadily increase the distance. Practise on the terrain you will walk on [some of the time]. If you're walking on rolling countryside, make sure you do long-distance routes on similar terrain. Or, if you're walking a hilly route such as the South West Coast Path, you might want to practise going up and down sets of steps,' says Barnett.

### 5 FUEL FOR DISTANCE

Walking a high mileage requires a lot of energy, so don't forget to practise training with your chosen fuel. 'It's really important to stay hydrated, as well as keep your salt and blood sugar levels up, on a long walk,' explains Barnett. 'Make sure you bring a good water bottle and test out any snacks you want to bring along, from gels and bars to sweets and dried fruit.' We hear that jelly sweets make great walking fuel!

### 6 LENGTHEN YOUR LIMBS

'Don't forget to stretch!' warns Barnett. 'It increases your flexibility, improves blood circulation and reduces your risk of injury. Stretching also helps to get rid of muscle tension produced during your walk, preventing next-day soreness.' Focus not only on your leg muscles (quadriceps, calves, hamstrings and glutes), but also on your core because the stomach, back and trunk gets used, too!

### 7 BE RESPECTFUL

Here in the UK, we're lucky to have such a fantastic network of public footpaths and walkways – look after them. 'Familiarise yourself with the Countryside Code so you can respect the environment you're hiking in,' says Barnett. 'Take heed of safety warnings such as weather forecasts and signs along footpaths.' Visit [ramblers.org.uk](http://ramblers.org.uk) for more outdoor-walking safety tips. ■

## THE OUTDOOR EDIT

Lightweight, sweat-wicking and smart kit is essential, whether you're taking on the roads or trails!



**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:** SAUCONY SONIC REFLEX JACKET (£100; [SAUCONY.CO.UK](http://SAUCONY.CO.UK)) This lightweight jacket is the perfect companion for dawn-to-dusk walks. It boasts 360° reflectivity and is ultra-breathable. ODLO EBE INSIDEOUT TIGHT (£65; [ODLO.COM](http://ODLO.COM)) From Odlo's new Shine in the Dark collection, these reflective and reversible tights are perfect for night-time hikes. KEEN KOVEN TRAINERS (£80; [KEENFOOTWEAR.COM](http://KEENFOOTWEAR.COM)) Perfect for off- and on-road, these low-cut trainers were made for mixed terrain. Waterproof, flexible and with grippy lugs on the sole, they're your go-to shoe. SOLE DUAL-LAYER SOCKS (£11.50; [YOURSOLE.CO.UK](http://YOURSOLE.CO.UK)) These super socks are the answer to comfy feet and skin that's free from walking-induced sores on long-distance hikes. BERGHAUS TECH TEE (£27; [GOOUTDOORS.CO.UK](http://GOOUTDOORS.CO.UK)) Great when the temperature dips, this long-sleeved baselayer boasts sweat-wicking fabric that'll keep you dry and comfy.



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# GYMStyle

FIT FASHION \* COOL KIT \* STYLE ADVICE



## We Love...

**HardnutZ Stealth HiVis Bike Helmet, £29.99; [halfords.com](http://halfords.com)**

As the nights start to draw in, road safety becomes even more important. Luckily, boosting your visibility just became easier with the HardnutZ glow-in-the-dark bike helmet. Covered in 15 highly visible reflective panels, this purse-friendly protection provides 360° visibility when it's dark. Safe cycling!





# PARK LIFE

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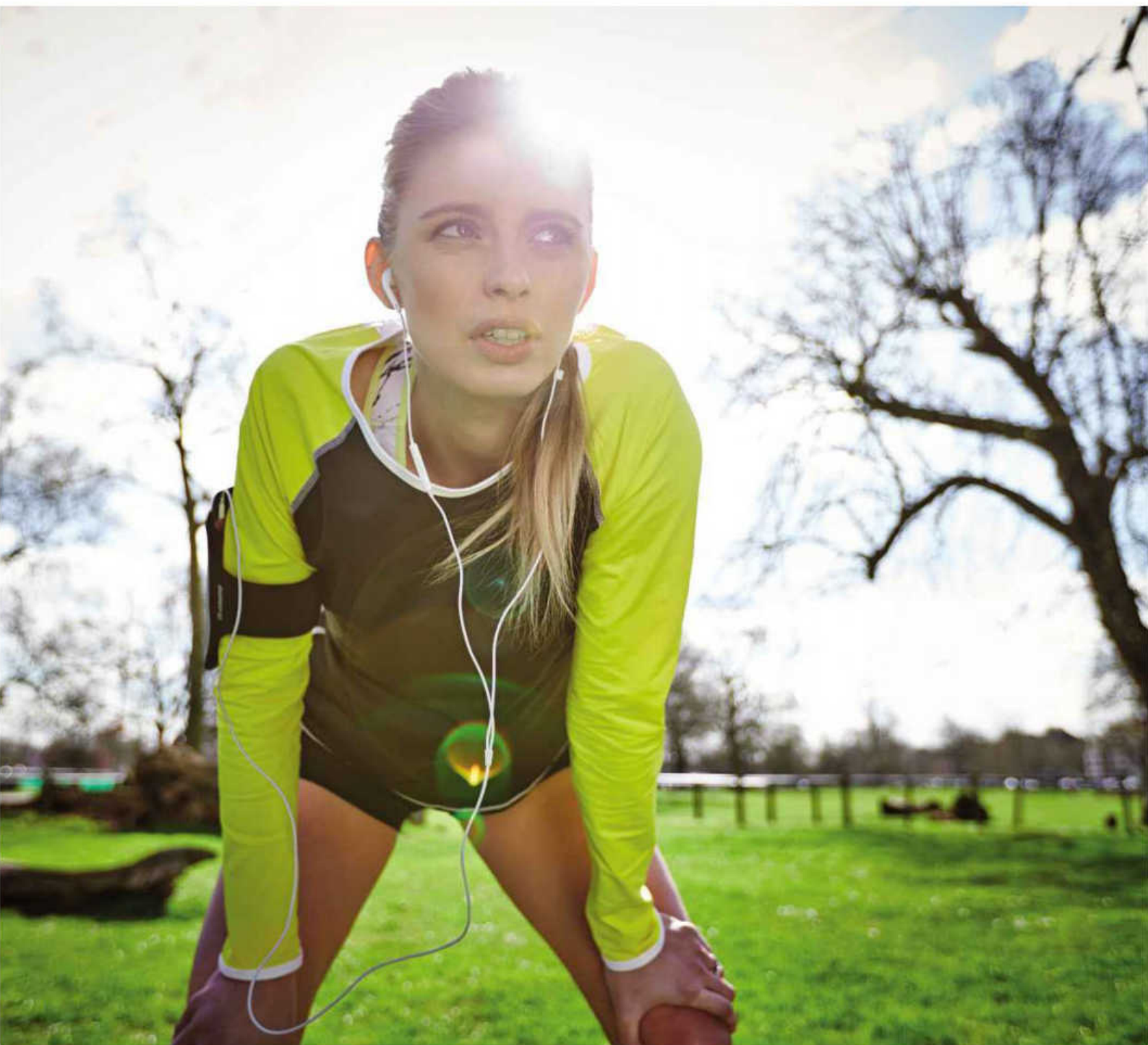
PHOTOGRAPHER: Ian Derry  
STYLIST: Kellie Daggett

**E-Padded Sports Bra**, £39, Striders  
Edge; **Zip Down Vest**, £78, Every  
Second Counts; **Leg Balance Tights**,  
£60, Asics; **Adizero Feather Prime**  
**Trainers**, £72, Adidas; **Tech Socks**,  
£6, Asics









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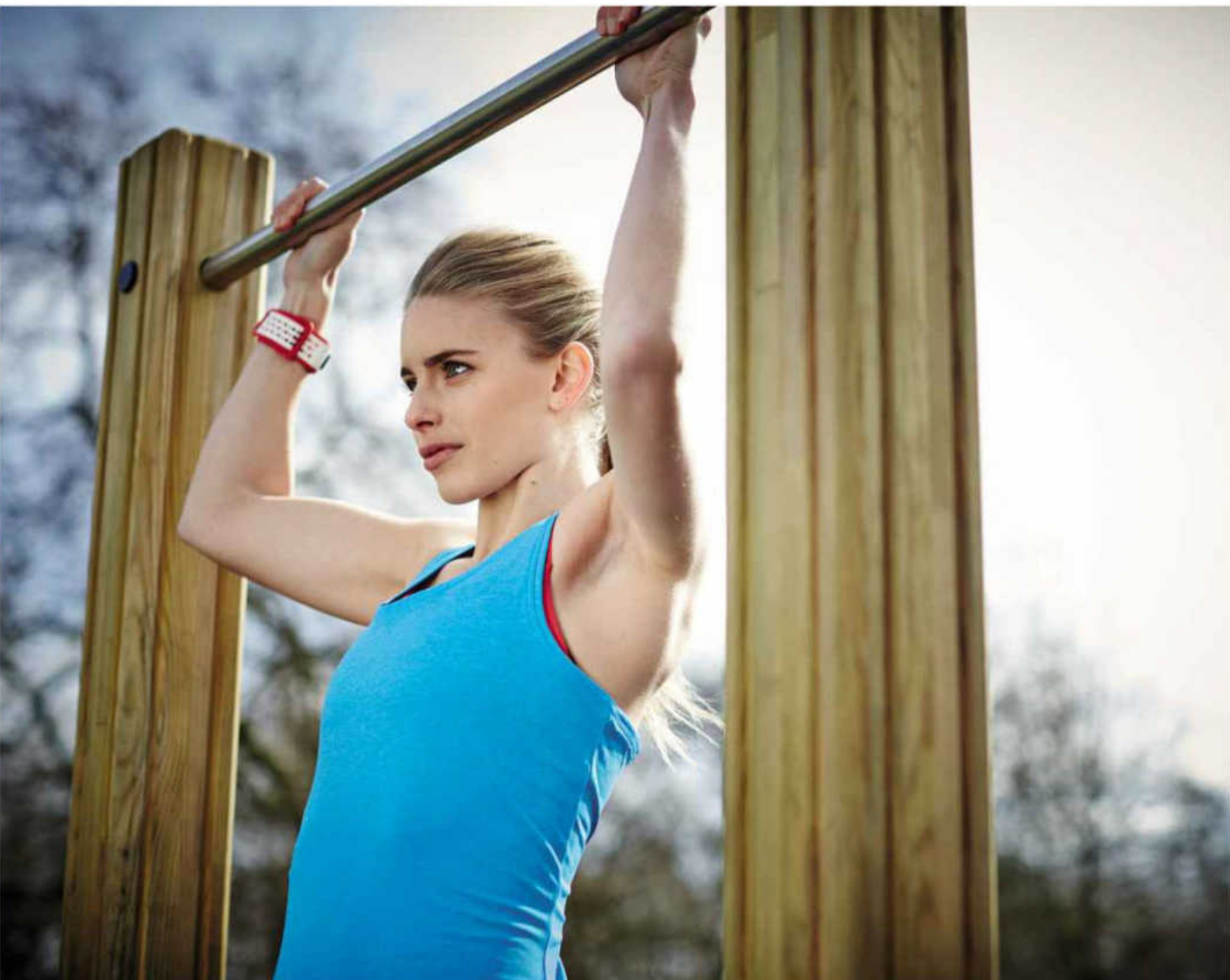
**Active Sport Top**, £30, Bjorn Borg;  
**Zip-Back Tee**, £80, Alala at Fashercise;  
**Flex Shorts**, £35, Striders Edge;  
**Armband**, £14.99, Shocksock at Amazon

Opposite:

**Pacesetter Run Tunic**, £65, Sweaty  
Betty; **Zelos Tight Hipster Shorts**,  
£17.99, Dhb; **Gram XC 11 Trainers**,  
£100, Haglöfs





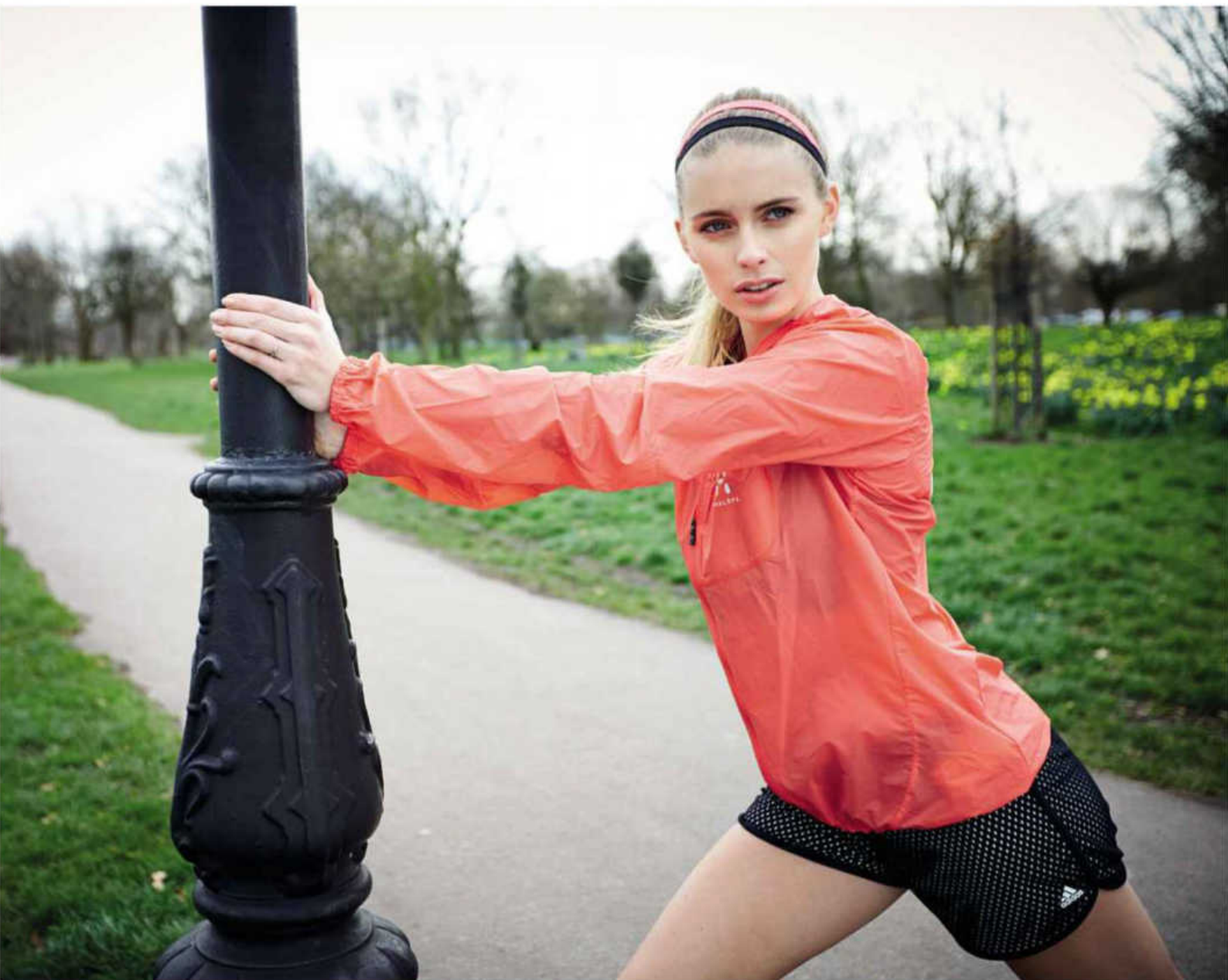


This page:

**Medium Cross Back Sports Bra**, £35, Odlo; **Climachill Tank Top**, £26, Adidas; **Multi-Sport Cardio GPS Watch**, £209.99, TomTom

Opposite:

**Pace Jacket**, £150, Haglöfs; **M10 Shorts**, £26, Adidas; **Skinny Rubberised Headbands**, £6 each, Sweaty Betty



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HAIR & MAKE-UP: **Jo Clayton** @ [joclayton.com](https://joclayton.com) using Paul Mitchell hair products & Mac make-up MODEL: **Kim Hartwell** @ WAthletic



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This step-by-step guide teaches you the basics and offers yoga workouts for cyclists, swimmers, runners, tennis players and skiers – all devised by a top yoga expert and suitable for all levels.



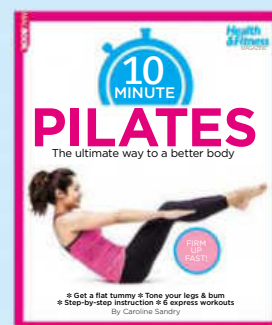
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WORDS: Becky Fletcher PHOTOGRAPHY: Thinkstock



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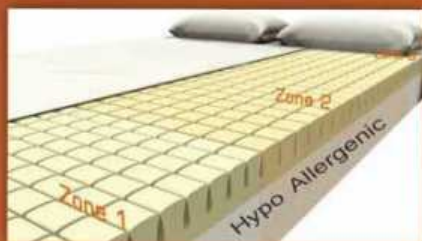
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# YOU *Time*

HEALTHY RECIPES \* SPA AND WELLBEING \* TRAVEL

## *Care & share*

Whether it's buying someone flowers or just calling a loved one to say hello, being kind can provide a wealth of benefits, especially if you're of a shy disposition. A study by Canadian researchers Jennifer Trew and Lynn Alden, published in the journal *Motivation and Emotion*, found that socially anxious participants, who engaged in acts of kindness prior to being put in a social situation, found it easier to interact with others. The study's authors believe lending a helping hand negates feelings of rejection and anxiety or stress. Spread the love!







# Spa time

The latest pampering places, products and treatments



## SPA OF THE MONTH

**Barceló Sancti Petri Spa Resort, Cadiz, Spain**

Boasting an expanse of white sand and the Atlantic

Ocean as a backdrop, plus tropical botanical gardens bursting to the brim with exotic flowers, you'd be forgiven for thinking that Barceló's Sancti Petri Resort, north-west of Gibraltar in south west Spain, is a million miles away from the UK.

Fortunately, the hotel is a mere two-hour flight from London Luton airport and a short transfer from Jerez airport. The luxury 5-star surroundings include five outdoor pools (including one adult-only, offering peaceful lounging), poolside bars and restaurants, a fitness centre, an Irish bar (complete with bowling alley), a variety of shops and a nightclub. The rooms are spacious and comfortable, and are fitted out with all the mod cons you could wish for, so you can retire to your room after all that sunshine and pampering and relax in peace.

On top of the excellent amenities and stylish avant-garde design, the hotel's service is impeccable – leaving you to relax and unwind knowing your every whim has been taken care of.

## THE PROGRAMME

If you want an action-packed trip, Andalusia and the hotel offer plenty for you to see and do. Try surfing or paddle surfing on the waves of the Atlantic, hire a bike, go horseriding, play tennis or do a round of golf at a nearby club – the area is famed for its fantastic courses.

We were there to sample the new Toning and Detox retreat, designed to pamper and help you shape up. The programme is jam-packed, and includes a consultation with a nutritionist and aesthetics therapies

**'Try a Spin class on the rooftop terrace – you'll barely be aware how hard you're working when the view's *that* good.'**

expert, two Fango (or mud) therapy treatments, two deeply Hydrating Body Exfoliations, two Seaweed Wrap treatments, one Deep Active Hygiene Facial, a Personalised Facial treatment, two hydro jet sessions, two oil baths, five personal training sessions, yoga and chi kung classes (similar to t'ai chi), and a post-treatment health plan. Phew!

If you can fit it in, an open-air Spin class on the rooftop terrace is a must-do – you'll barely be aware how much you're working when the view is *that* good and the sea breeze is cooling you down. Your usual gym surroundings will never be the same again!

## THE SPA

U-Spa, the largest spa in Andalusia, is all about laid-back luxury. From the knowledgeable staff to the inclusive treatment list and wonderful skincare products (Elemis and Dr Thalgo), U-Spa has pampering down to a tee. Guests can also enjoy a comprehensive hydrotherapy circuit, complete with icy plunge baths, hydromassage beds, heated loungers, sensation showers and a cobblestone path. We took advantage of the circuit post-workout, and it left our skin firmer,



## TRY THIS...

**WEI Multi Task Multi Mask Collection****(£16 for three, spackenk.com)**

How does your skin look and feel today? Like it could do with a bit of extra TLC? But what if it's never the same one day to the next? You're in luck. With this pack of three face masks, inspired by Chinese herbal medicine, you can choose to detox, brighten or fight wrinkles! Use the Golden Root Purifying Mud Mask to cleanse impurities, the Kakadu Plum Brightening Sugar Mask to hydrate and brighten the skin or the Manuka Bee Venom Anti Wrinkle Mask to diminish fine lines and firm skin.

Ingredients include pure China clay, Chinese Angelica and reishi mushroom.

Apply your mask of choice to clean skin with the soft brush and leave on for 10 minutes before washing off with warm water. Ta-dah!



## 'IT WORKED FOR ME'

**H&F's Mary Comber tries a 'facial for the hair and scalp'**

**What?** Prescriptive Hair-Healing Spa Treatment, £80 one hour.

**Where?** The Philip Kingsley Trichological Clinic, London (philipkingsley.co.uk)

Has summer left your hair and scalp in need of an SOS? Whether it's sun damage, straighteners or stress, The Philip Kingsley clinic (world famous for its hair-loss treatments) has a healing hair treatment designed to diagnose and treat damage from the inside out. First, the trichotherapist applied a mask to my scalp, then the new Philip Kingsley Geranium and Neroli Elasticizer (£31.50 for 150ml). Next, it was under a hair steamer for 15 minutes before a 10-minute head massage. Throughout, the therapist diagnosed the condition of my hair and scalp and offered expert tips. 'Wash your hair every day as you would your face,' she advised. 'Always apply conditioner starting near the



ends and work up, stroking your hands downwards to close the hair cuticles.' Once the mask was washed out, my hair was pampered with fragrant shampoos and conditioners to match my hair type, plus scalp tonic. A scalp-friendly blow dry – and more quick tips – rounded things off. My hair felt its softest, ever – you'll never want a salon treatment again.

boosted our circulation and eased muscle tension in an instant. Our bespoke treatment of a frangipani exfoliation with seaweed wrap, massage and facial, detoxified and drained, as well as softened and revitalised dull skin.

beef sirloin and slow-cooked shoulder of lamb, to suit everyone's tastes.

**PRICE**

Rates at Barceló Sancti Petri Spa start from £48pp per night. The price is based on two

sharing and includes breakfast. The Toning and Detox package starts from £826pp, based on a seven-night, half-board stay in a Double Deluxe room and including the full seven-day spa programme. To book, visit [barcelosanctipetri.com](http://barcelosanctipetri.com).

**THE FOOD**

If you're on the Toning and Detox retreat, it's easy to stay on the wellbeing wagon with three restaurants and a pool bar to choose from. A dietician from the hotel can also provide you with a customised menu. If you want to indulge, pick from Bahía Beach Club or the Almadra buffet restaurant, which offer a wide range of cuisine and local treats. The new Atunante restaurant celebrates the region's famous Bluefin Tuna, with a menu dedicated to the stuff. The Tuna and Chocolate dessert might be an acquired taste, but the tuna belly, tartare and carpaccio are delicious. Not a fan of Blue Fin tuna? Fear not. The talented chefs have created other mouthwatering dishes, including





# CUBAN REVOLUTIONS

Abigail Butcher  
experiences a  
unique Caribbean  
vibe on two wheels



Abigail, centre, and group stop off  
to visit a farm at the end of the tour



In and around Trinidad, horses are  
a common mode of transport

Children are playing ball in the cobbled streets; families and friends of all generations are sitting and chatting in doorways as we pass; fruit stalls selling fragrant, in-season mangos, coconuts and avocados make my mouth water.

We're in Cuba, and the sea breeze we've cycled through for the past two hours has dropped as we've entered the Spanish colonial town of Trinidad. I'm pouring sweat but completely forget about it as we pedal through the town in search of our 'casa' – the family-run B&B that will be home for the next two nights.

Trinidad is a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the south of this communist-ruled Caribbean island, one of the last stops on a cycling tour of Cuba with adventure travel company Explore. We began in Havana, then pedalled through tropical forests to Viñales in the west, on to the Bay of Pigs and Cienfuegos to historic Trinidad before heading back to Havana.

The capital city is exactly as it looks in photographs – vintage American cars cruise streets of crumbling, colourful

mansions. Cuba has been frozen in time since the 1960s, and arriving here is rather like stumbling across a lost tribe – under Fidel Castro's rule, this nation has existed almost independently from the rest of civilisation.

## BRINK OF CHANGE

We spend the first morning in Havana wandering the streets, and cruising the capital's sights in open-top vintage cars, accompanied by our fantastic guide Jaime (pronounced Huy-mai). We drive backstreets lined with vivid orange trees and yellow laburnum trees, past the government buildings on Plaza de la Revolución (Revolution Square) and stop for coffee in Hotel Nacional, a huge state hotel reminiscent of Cuba's 1950s' heyday and now a national monument.

With the recent warming of relations between the US and Cuba, everything in this charming country is set to change. Massive restoration projects are underway in Havana in preparation for an influx of tourists, including dredging of the bay ready to receive cruise ships. In many ways, these people need the tourists and



the money it will bring, but I can't help feeling it's a shame – Cubans seem almost untouched by the rest of civilisation. There's no crime or threat and life seems simple – though I'm sure it's not.

As socialism has relaxed here, increasing numbers of casas have sprung up – owners renting a spare room for tourists – along with paladares, which are family-run restaurants cooking simple food in their home or, increasingly, private restaurants. It all helps to boost the state monthly wage of approximately £15.

We're staying in a mix of casas and state-run hotels, and eat in both paladares and state-run restaurants. The food, dismissed by some travellers as boring, is my idea of heaven. Main dishes are freshly caught fish, tiger prawns or lobster, chicken or pork, all grilled or pan fried and served with white rice and salad – for between £6-£12 a dish. Delicious, especially when washed down with the Cuban staple – mojitos made with fresh mint, soda, white Havana Club rum and sugar.

You're never far from sugar in this country, so it's a good job we're cycling around 40km a day. It doesn't sound much, but in the searing 35°C heat and humidity of my June visit, that distance requires two if not three times the effort of 40km back home. From November to March, it's a more cycle-friendly 25°C and less humid.

## FERTILE GROUND

After Havana, we begin cycling in the undulating hills surrounding the eco-village of Las Terrazas near Pinar del Río in the west, fortified by strong coffees in Maria's Bar. We pass tractors and trailers piled high with pineapples, trees laden with mango and avocado and palm trees lining the road. We're bound for the fertile Viñales Valley, with a quick stop at a tobacco farm to learn how these precious leaves are grown, harvested and dried, then rolled and cut into Cuba's famous cigars.

Our casa in Viñales is simple but spotless. Towels, bedding and bathrooms are basic, with noisy but effective air-conditioning units, but the welcome from locals (few of whom speak English) is heartfelt, and breakfast of fresh fruit and eggs charming. I wouldn't have swapped the experience for the most luxurious of five-star hotels. By meeting locals, eating and sleeping as they do, we learn so much more about Cuba.

After a quick visit to the cool limestone caves down the valley from Viñales, we pedal through the swamps to the Bay of Pigs (Bahía de Cochinos), famous for the

failed 1961 invasion by the CIA – crunching over the bodies of land crabs and stopping at a crocodile farm where rare-breed crocs are bred for preservation.

We also visit Cienfuegos, on the southern coast of Cuba – my favourite city on the trip and one of the richest, founded by sugar merchants in the early 1800s. Its wide, airy main square – Parque José Martí – is filled with palm trees and roads lined with vintage cars, the streets thronging with people all day. It's like the 1950s.

On we cycle towards the coast, stopping before our journey to Trinidad for a welcome dip in the sea at Yaguanabo – and more lunch of fish, rice and salad.

## LA DOLCE VITA

In Trinidad, we stop for two nights, a welcome respite from life on the road, with plenty of time to enjoy Cuban life to the full – salsa dancing, mojitos and sunbathing on a beach of white sand, sipping water from coconuts and swimming in crystal clear waters.

And all too soon it's time to cycle back to Havana, through tropical mountains, stopping at a local farm to taste honey, coffee and see yet more charming, simple, unrushed life.

As I board the flight home, I vow to return – not something I often do with trips. I just hope that in the meantime Cuba doesn't change too fast, nor too much. ■



*The pioneering 1960s eco resort of Las Terrazas, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve*

## GETTING THERE

Explore's 15-day Cycle Cuba! tour starts from £2,238pp and includes return flights, eight nights' standard hotel accommodation, six nights in casas on a bed and breakfast basis, one evening meal, bike hire, transport and the services of a tour leader, driver and cycle guide.

Visit [explore.co.uk](http://explore.co.uk) or call 01252 884723.



**Visit Cuba before scenes like this become a thing of the past**





The sponge  
is made with  
very little butter  
and lots of eggs,  
which make it  
super light.

# YOU CAN eat cake

Tuck into these virtuous treats without worrying (too much) about your waistline

**L**et's face it—we're all tempted by sweets and treats, at least every once in a while. It's a hard decision as you walk by decadent, buttery cakes whether to sneak a nibble or compromise flavour and go for the less appetising diet treats on the market. Or to give up these kinds of foods altogether. That's where healthy baker Gee Charman comes in with her ingenious new low-fat, low-sugar cookbook, *Guilt-Free Baking* (Nourish Books, £16.99). Her sweet-treat recipes are all made with healthier ingredients, fabulous flavours, and 'good' fats, perfect for those afternoon cravings or after-dinner delights. The book is packed with delicious recipes for cakes and desserts all 300 calories or less.

Charman spent years cooking for the Royal Family at Kensington Palace after her training at Tante Marie Culinary Academy in Surrey. She's a food stylist for TV

shows including *Let's Do Lunch*, *Gordon Behind Bars*, and *Britain's Best Dish* as well as for celebrity chefs, such as Gordon Ramsay. She's used her knowledge and expertise to rework how to bake flavourful, healthy treats: instead of substituting butter for margarine or using artificial sweeteners, she simply cuts back on some—not all—of the naughty stuff. Then, she substitutes what she's cut with fruit purées, avocado, tofu, herbs, spices and more to add lots of flavour and texture, making most of her desserts taste even better than the sugar-packed option! Try her Raspberry ripple cheesecake made with tofu, or her low-fat Plum and almond cheesecake with rosemary, for example. Or how about the delicious Chocolate cupcakes with dark chocolate and avocado frosting? Go on, treat yourself, family and friends to Charman's healthier yet still really tasty cakes, cookies, brownies, tarts and pies.

WORDS: Ellie George

## Quick tip

'When cooking low-fat, low-sugar treats, go big with flavours such as spices and herbs. It masks the fact that you're missing the bits that usually make bakes tasty.'

## SUMMER BERRY GATEAU

**Serves:** 12

**Preparation time:** 20 minutes, plus 20 minutes' whisking

**Cooking time:** 35 minutes

**Per serving:** 219 calories, 6.7g fat (3g saturates), 10g protein, 27g carbohydrate (11.5g sugar), 3g fibre, 0.2g salt

**Low-calorie cooking oil spray, for greasing**

**50g butter**

**50g golden caster sugar**

**6 eggs**

**250g plain flour**

**2 tbsp low-sugar strawberry jam**

**430g thick fat-free natural Greek yoghurt**

**1 tbsp clear honey**

**600g mixed summer berries**

**1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas mark 4. Line the bases of two 20cm round sandwich tins with baking paper and grease the sides with a little low-calorie cooking oil spray.

**2** Put the sugar and eggs in a large, heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water, then turn the heat down to low and whisk for 15–20 minutes, using an electric mixer, until really light and fluffy and doubled in size. You should be able to drip a W shape from the whisks, which should remain on the surface for eight seconds.

**3** Put the butter in a small saucepan over a low heat and, when foaming, slowly whisk it into the egg mixture a drop at a time, whisking continuously. Gently fold in the flour, taking care not to overmix. Divide the mixture between the prepared tins and bake for 25 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean.

**4** Turn the cakes out onto a wire rack to cool. Once cooled, use a serrated knife to cut each cake in half horizontally, giving you four discs. Spread one side of each cake disc with the jam. Mix together the yoghurt and honey. Divide the yoghurt among the four discs, spreading it out over the jam. Layer the cakes on top of each other, then load the top tier with fresh summer berries.





The low-fat yoghurt and apple chunks keep the cake moist in the centre, while the cinnamon topping adds crunch.

## APPLE & CINNAMON CRUMBLE CAKE

**Serves:** 12

**Preparation time:** 15 minutes

**Cooking time:** 1 hour

**Per serving:** 200 calories, 4g fat (2g saturates), 5g protein, 35g carbohydrate (18g sugar), 1g fibre, 0.5g salt

**Low-calorie cooking oil spray, for greasing**

**3 eggs**

**125g caster sugar**

**200g fat-free natural yoghurt**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**225g self-raising flour**

**2 tsp ground cinnamon**

**2 tsp baking powder**

**3 apples, cored, skin on, 2 grated and 1 chopped into 1cm dice**

**40g plain flour**

**30g butter**

**30g granulated sugar**

**1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas mark 4. Grease a 900g loaf tin with oil spray.

**2** Beat together the eggs, caster sugar, yoghurt and vanilla extract, using an electric mixer, until light and creamy. Sift over the self-raising flour, one teaspoon of

the cinnamon and the baking powder and fold in, then stir in the apple. Spoon the mixture into the prepared loaf tin.

**3** Put the plain flour in a large bowl, then rub in the butter, using your fingertips, until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the granulated sugar and the remaining cinnamon, then sprinkle the mixture over the top of the cake. Bake for 1 hour until the top is golden brown.

**4** Leave to cool in the tin for 10 minutes before transferring to a wire rack.





Rhubarb is super juicy when cooked. Tossing it in cornflour thickens the juices and gives the cake a jammy topping.

## AUSTRIAN-STYLE RHUBARB CAKE

**Serves:** 12

**Preparation time:** 45 minutes

**Cooking time:** 40 minutes

**Per serving:** 154 calories, 4.4g fat (2.5g saturates), 3g protein, 23g carbohydrate (11g sugar), 1.5g fibre, 0.3g salt

**Low-calorie cooking oil spray, for greasing**

**500g rhubarb, trimmed and cubed**

**125g caster sugar**

**1 tbsp cornflour**

**50g butter, softened**

**2 eggs**

**175g plain flour**

**2 tsp baking powder**

**1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas mark 4. Grease a 23cm loose-based cake tin with low-calorie

spray oil and line the base with baking paper.

**2** Put the chunks of rhubarb in a bowl and sprinkle over 2 tablespoons of the sugar. Leave for 30 minutes, then drain off the liquid and pat it dry. Dust with cornflour and toss together.

**3** Beat together the butter and sugar, using an electric mixer, until light and creamy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then fold in the flour and baking powder.

**4** Spoon the batter into the cake tin, top it with the dried rhubarb and bake for 40 minutes until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 15 mins.

## GEE'S HEALTHY-BAKING TIPS



○ Make fruit purées, such as apple, in big batches and freeze it in ice cube trays. That way the staple for low-fat, low-sugar baking is always easily available.

○ Don't add the fat back into these guilt-free treats by serving them with full-fat ice cream and custard. Stick to custard and cream made with skimmed milk or a simple dollop of low-fat yoghurt.

○ Taking just a bit of the bad out of cakes makes them far more enjoyable and still a treat. Super healthy, no fat, no sugar, fun-free bakes are not a treat and they make you crave the naughty bits even more. Moderation is good.

○ Some of the recipes are suitable for freezing, which stops you feeling the need to polish everything off in once go – treats can be stored for those moments when the cravings hit!

○ Don't be tempted to go low-fat by using margarine. It's full of chemicals and it's better to cook in a guilt-free way with a little butter than use that stuff!



*Guilt-Free Baking* by Gee Charman costs £16.99 and is published by Nourish Books.



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# WORKOUT HANDBOOK

\* 15 PAGES OF EXPERT ADVICE AND INSTRUCTION

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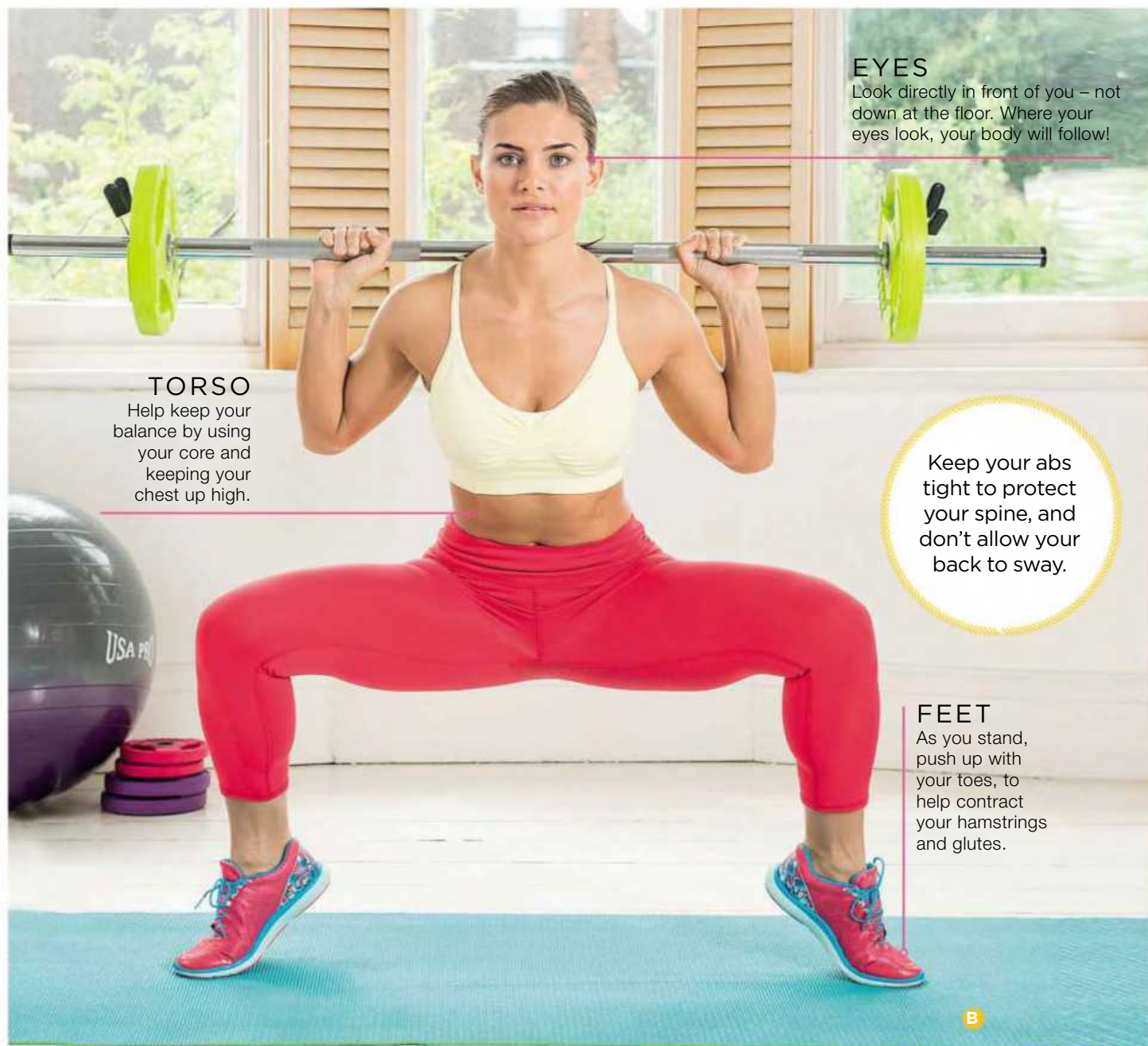






# SHOW SOME LEG

This lower-body barbell workout could be just the workout you've been looking for to help streamline your thighs



## EYES

Look directly in front of you – not down at the floor. Where your eyes look, your body will follow!

## TORSO

Help keep your balance by using your core and keeping your chest up high.

Keep your abs tight to protect your spine, and don't allow your back to sway.

## FEET

As you stand, push up with your toes, to help contract your hamstrings and glutes.

A



## TIP-TOE PLIÉ SQUAT

**Reps:** 10

**Benefits:** Works your thighs, calves and core.

- Begin with your feet just over shoulder-width apart, toes turned out slightly, core engaged and upper body standing tall. Place a light barbell on your shoulders and hold it tightly to help contract your core and upper body muscles (A).
- Rise onto your toes, get your balance, then slowly push your hips back so you lower into a squat (B).
- At the bottom on the move, hold for a couple of seconds, then push back up through your toes and squeeze your bottom as you stand. Repeat.



## LUNGE

**Reps:** 20 (10 each leg)

**Benefits:** Builds the strength of each leg individually, correcting imbalances, improving sports performance and preventing injury.

- Stand upright with your feet shoulder-width apart and a barbell across your shoulders (A).
- Step your right leg forward and go into a lunge (B).
- Once both knees form a 90° angle and your front thigh is parallel to the floor, straighten your legs and return to the start. Repeat all 10 reps, then switch legs.



## SQUAT JUMP

**Reps:** 20

**Benefits:** Strengthens your cardiovascular system and tones your muscles. Jumping moves like this build lean muscle mass, helping to create slimmer legs and a sleeker shape.

- Hold your barbell so it's across your shoulders.
- Bend your knees and lower into a squat (A), then immediately change direction and push from your calves and hamstrings to jump your feet off the floor (B).
- Land softly in a squat, then jump back up again immediately.

## LATERAL LUNGE

**Reps:** 20 (10 each side)

**Benefits:** Works the large muscles of your quads, hamstrings and glutes plus your inner and outer thighs and smaller hip and ankle muscles that don't get worked with regular squats.

- Stand with your feet together and the barbell across your shoulders (A).
- Take a step to your left so your legs are wider than hip-width apart, keeping your feet parallel.
- Kick your hips back, then bend your left knee and squat straight down, making sure your knee doesn't go over your toes (B). Lower as far as you can go, and then drive through your left heel to stand up. Do all 10 reps on one side before switching, or alternate sides to get your heart rate up.







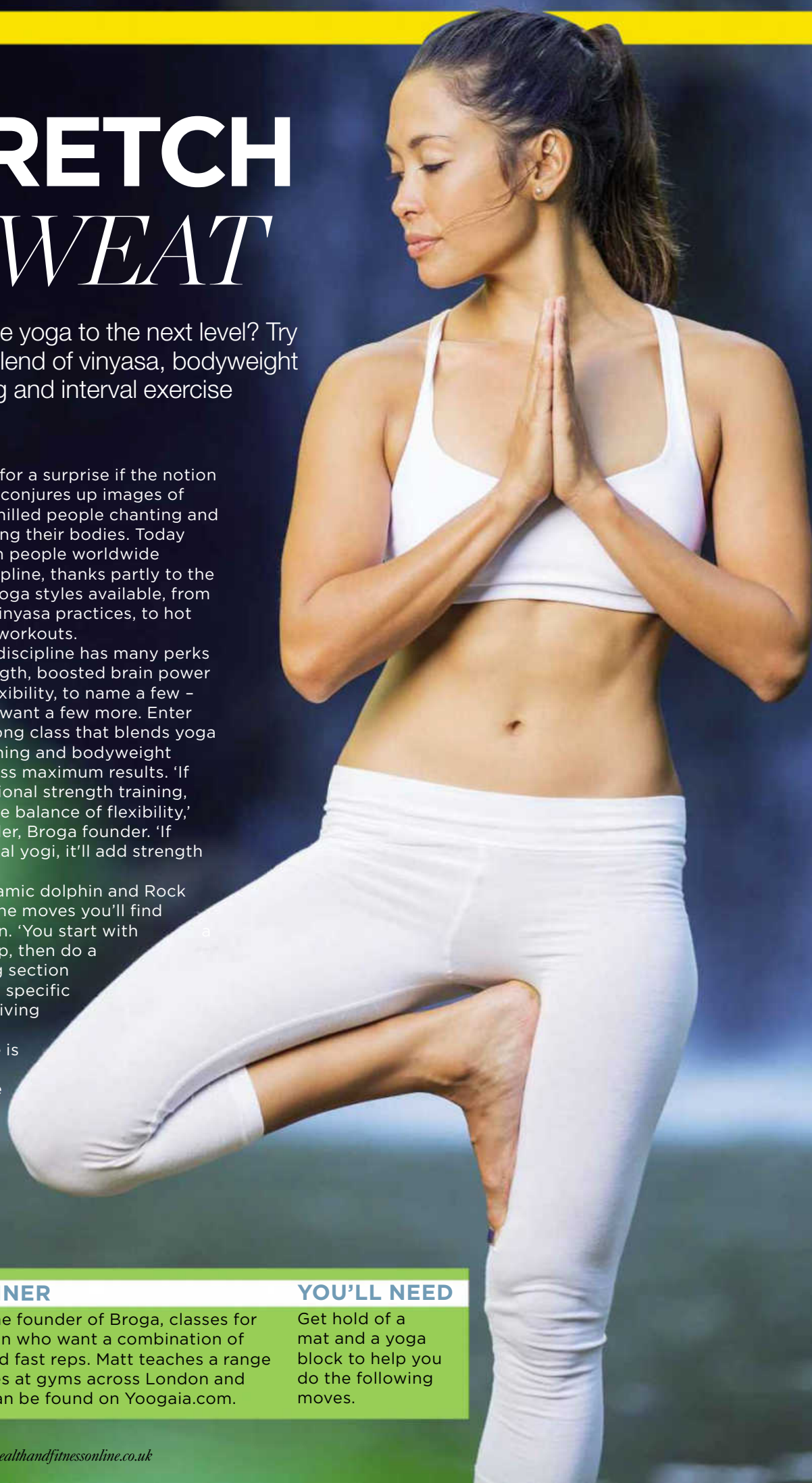
# STRETCH & SWEAT

Ready to take yoga to the next level? Try this unique blend of vinyasa, bodyweight training and interval exercise

**Y**ou're in for a surprise if the notion of yoga conjures up images of super-chilled people chanting and contorting their bodies. Today around 30 million people worldwide practise the discipline, thanks partly to the huge variety of yoga styles available, from restorative and vinyasa practices, to hot yoga and fusion workouts.

Of course, the discipline has many perks – increased strength, boosted brain power and improved flexibility, to name a few – but perhaps you want a few more. Enter Broga, an hour-long class that blends yoga with interval training and bodyweight exercise to harness maximum results. 'If you're into traditional strength training, Broga will add the balance of flexibility,' explains Matt Miller, Broga founder. 'If you're a traditional yogi, it'll add strength and power.'

Dirty dog, Dynamic dolphin and Rock star – these are the moves you'll find in a Broga session. 'You start with a dynamic warm-up, then do a strength-building section that focuses on a specific body part, also giving it a stretch,' says Miller. 'Each pose is done repetitively and builds on the previous pose.' If you're up for the challenge, read on!



## YOUR TRAINER

Matt Miller is the founder of Broga, classes for men and women who want a combination of yoga moves and fast reps. Matt teaches a range of Broga classes at gyms across London and his workouts can be found on Yoogaia.com.

## YOU'LL NEED

Get hold of a mat and a yoga block to help you do the following moves.

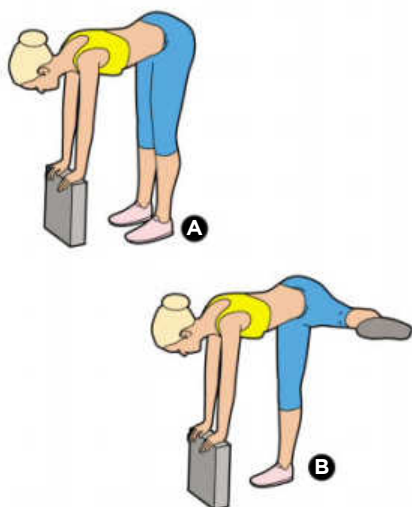


# #1 LOWER BODY

## LATERAL SIDE KICK

**Reps:** 10 (each side)

**Targets:** Abductors (outer thigh muscles)  
Stand with a block in front of your feet and extend your arms straight up. Fold forwards to the block and rest your palms firmly on it (A). Adjust the block height depending on your flexibility. Extend your left leg out to the side and hold for five breaths (B). Bring your left leg back next to your standing leg. Do 10 kicks, roll up to standing and extend your arms back up. Fold forward and repeat on the right side.

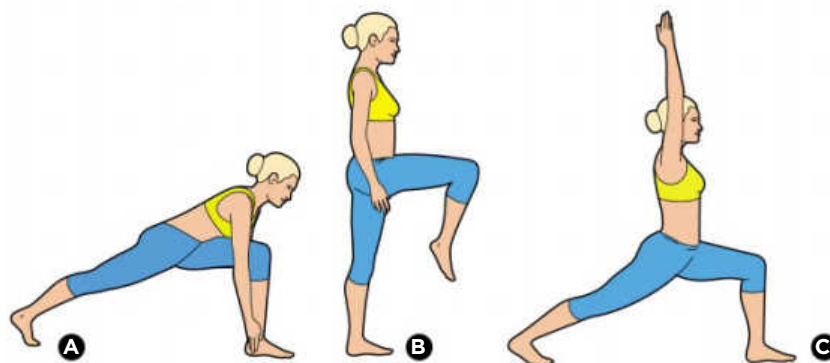


## WARRIOR 1 DROP LUNGE

**Reps:** 10 (each side)

**Targets:** Quads and glutes, plus raises your heartbeat

Start in a lunge with your right leg fully extended backwards, hips low and fingers on the floor (A). Rise up to standing, shifting into a one-legged balance on your left foot (B). In one quick move, drop back into the lunge. To make it easier, don't lunge as low. Repeat this 10 times, then finish in Warrior 1, a high lunge with hands overhead. Hold for five breaths, slowly increasing the stretch (C). Repeat on the other side.

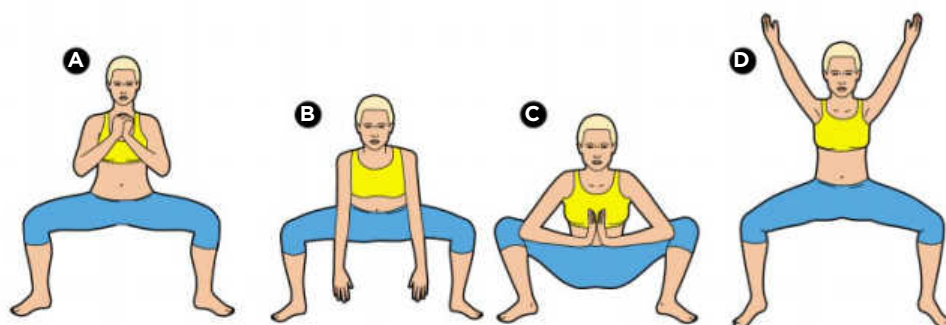


## HORSE SEQUENCE

**Reps:** 1 full sequence

**Targets:** Abductors, adductors, gluteals and calves

Start in a wide squat – try to get your hips parallel to your knees – and hold both hands in a fist at chest height (A). Hold for five breaths, then lower your hips 10cm closer to the ground, touching fingertips to the floor (B). Hold for five breaths. Bring your elbows to inside your knees, forcing your legs wider (C) and hold for five breaths. Extend your arms overhead and hold for five breaths. Lift your heels off the floor (D) and hold for five breaths. Stand up and shake your legs out.

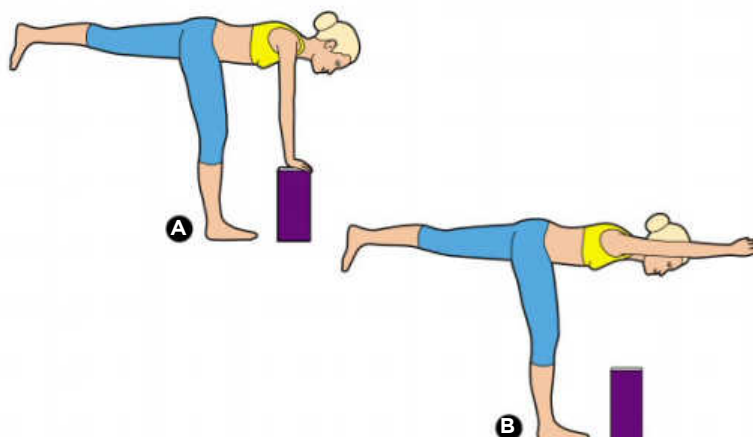


## WARRIOR 3 SEQUENCE

**Reps:** 1 full sequence (each side)

**Targets:** Hamstrings and glutes, as well as stabilisers in the knees and ankles

Start standing with a block in front of your feet and raise your hands up towards the sky. Fold forward to the block and rest your palms firmly on it. Adjust the block height depending on your flexibility. Extend your left leg behind, trying to get it parallel to the floor (A). Hold for five breaths. Lower and roll up to standing. Repeat on the same leg, resting fingertips only on the block. Hold for five breaths. Lower and roll up to standing. Fold forward and repeat on the same leg. This time, extend your arms overhead in a full Warrior 3 pose (B). Repeat the entire sequence on the other side.







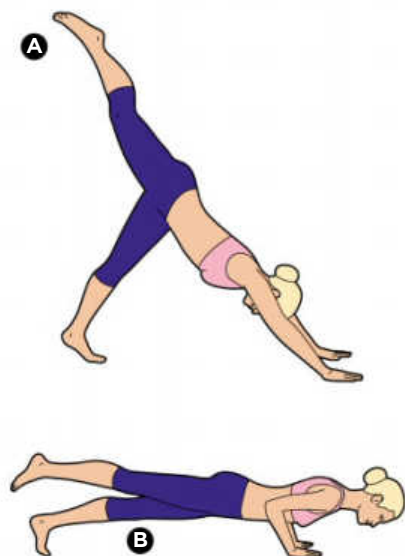
# #2

## UPPER BODY

### DIRTY DOG

**Reps:** 5 (each side)

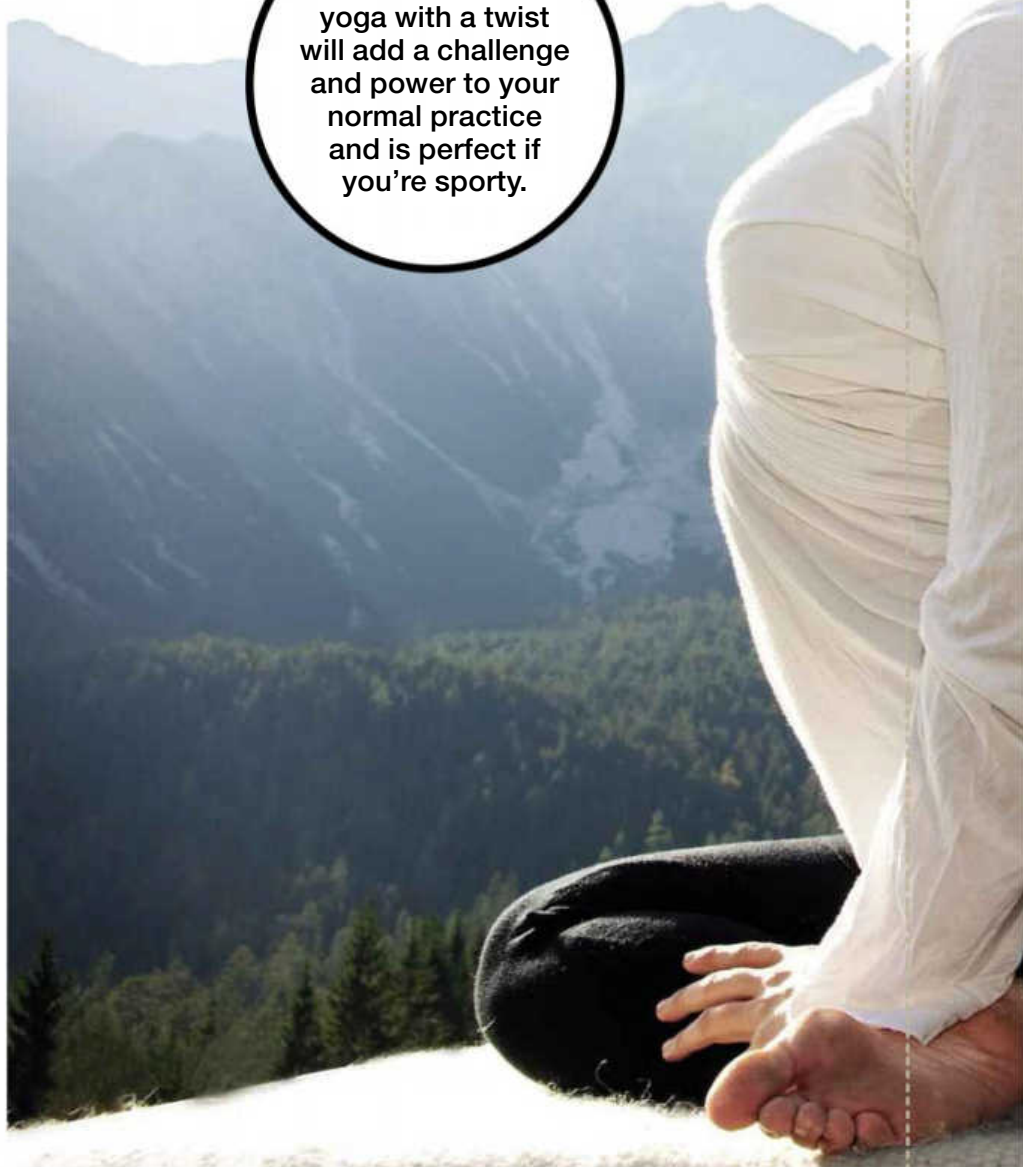
**Targets:** Triceps, chest and shoulders  
Begin in Downward dog (see below), then extend your right leg to a one-legged split (A). Dive down between your hands, keeping your shoulders away from your neck and elbows tucked tight to your ribs (B). Immediately, push back into the one-legged split (A). Repeat this sequence five times. Finish in Child's pose (see p103), then return to the start and repeat on the other side. Make it easier by dropping your supporting leg down to the floor and pushing back with your knee on the floor.



#### Downward dog

From hands and knees, lift your knees off the floor, straightening your legs and arms and lifting your bottom towards the ceiling. Put your heels on the floor, let your head hang freely and stretch your waist.

This type of yoga with a twist will add a challenge and power to your normal practice and is perfect if you're sporty.

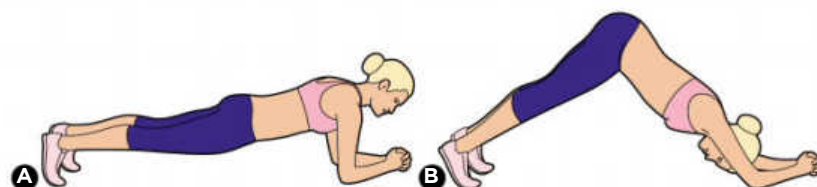


### DYNAMIC DOLPHIN

**Reps:** 10

**Targets:** Triceps and shoulders

Start in a forearm plank with fingers interlaced (A). Rock forwards to bring your chin beyond your fists. Immediately, push back and raise your hips in the air into Dolphin pose (B). Repeat this sequence 10 times.





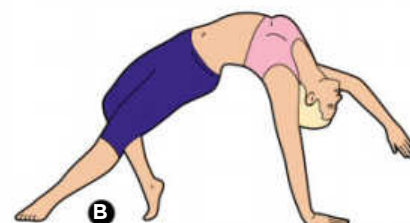
### Child's pose

From a kneeling position, drop your bottom towards your heels as you stretch the rest of your body down and forward. Relax your arms on the floor in front of you. Rest your stomach on your thighs, and your forehead on the mat.

### ROCK STAR

**Reps:** 1 full sequence (each side)

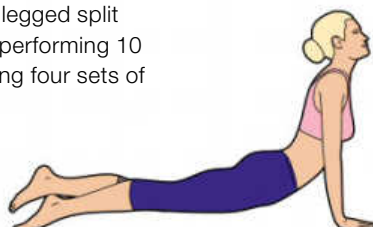
**Targets:** Triceps and core  
Start in a high lunge with your right foot forward and left hand on the floor. Raise your right hand straight up (A). Take five breaths as you rotate deeper into the twist. Shift back into Downward dog and repeat the sequence with your left foot in front. Return to the high lunge position in picture A. This time, extend your right foot back behind your left leg and reach your right arm into an arch (B). Hold for five breaths, then repeat on the other side.



### DYNAMIC UP-DOG

**Reps:** 10 (each side)

**Targets:** Lower back, and increases back flexion and extension  
Start in Downward dog and extend your right leg to a one-legged split (see Dirty dog pose A). In one move, flow forward into a one-legged Up-dog pose, as shown. Make sure your chest is lifted and shoulders are strong. Push back into the one-legged split and repeat 10 times. Finish in Child's pose before performing 10 repetitions on the other side. Make it easier by doing four sets of five reps, resting in Child's pose between sets. ■







# IN FULL SWING

If you thought golf was a game reserved for elderly gents, it's time to think again – more and more women are appreciating the benefits of the sport

**W**hat do you think about when we mention

**the word golf? Groups of men wearing crazy trousers and Argyle sweaters strolling around a green?**

Chances are you don't think about women with rock-solid cores and über-toned limbs – yet that's exactly what golf is becoming increasingly known for. Gone are the days of golf being a 'man's sport' – a new generation of female putters are coming to the fore as the ones to watch. 'Getting more lady professionals at golf clubs is really good,' says Melissa Reid, one of the top names in women's golf. 'People see plenty of male footballers, cricketers or golfers playing, but not so many women – but it does happen.' In fact, data shows the PGA is pushing for more women to get involved in the sport.

And while women still lag behind men when it comes to golf participation (just 19 per cent of golfers are female, according to the National Golf Foundation), the numbers are beginning to add up. In 2013, an impressive two-thirds of new golfers were female. And for good reason. During a round of golf you'll walk 5-7km, and if you pull your own bag along, you'll burn more than 700 calories. You'll also increase your life expectancy by five years. Girl power!

## HOW MELISSA REID STAYS ON TOP OF HER GAME



Pro golfer Melissa Reid is one of the top names in British women's golf. She was a pre-tournament favourite for the recent ISPS HANDA Ladies European Masters (ladieseuropeanmasters.com) and is

in the running for a prestigious Solheim Cup place. Is it a coincidence that Reid is also in pretty fierce shape? We don't think so! The pro athlete trains pretty hard. We tapped the 27-year-old to find out how she keeps fit for golf. Hint – it's tougher than you think.

downswing motion,' explains Reid. 'I focus on my glutes during training, with single-leg bridges, hip thrusts and leg presses. I don't do as many squats as I used to; it's all about getting the technique for the exercises right and increasing the weight.'

## RUN FOR FITNESS

Surprising fact – golf is great for weight management and cardiovascular health. According to data, golfers spend around four to five hours outside, walking at a brisk pace a lot of the time. 'It's important to do a lot of cardio in training,' says Reid. 'But the best things for cardio fitness are other sports. I play squash, football and ride my bike quite a bit. I also go running two days a week, clocking 5-10km. I like to run – it's my favourite cardio activity, but I mix it up to get a lot of variation.'

## CARVE THE CORE

A strong mid-section is essential for golfers, mainly because a lot of the motion for the golf swing comes from the core muscles. 'The core is the centrepiece of the body and, if it's not strong, you're going to move all over the place,' claims Reid. 'I have three main workout sessions a week, but I'll also do a bit of core and stretch every day. My main core moves are leg raises, side planks and using resistance bands to do some rotation work that targets the torso.' Flat abs, here we come!

## TRAIN ON TOUR

For some sports, exercisers will taper in the lead up to competition – but training doesn't

## MIX GYM MOVES

Today's golfers are getting fit in the gym. 'I do four kinds of workouts – a capacity workout, which involves doing bodyweight exercises until my muscles get really, really tired; a weights session; a mobility workout and postural session, which is really important for good golf technique; and a conditioning session, which is basically a cardio workout,' reveals Reid. 'I see my trainer three to four times a week at Loughborough Sport.' Yep, it's pretty intense.

## TARGET GLUTE STRENGTH

The chances are you don't associate playing golf with honing a strong butt – but you should! 'Strong glute muscles are so important from a stability point of view, plus the glutes are activated during the backswing to the



## HONE A HOT GOLF BODY!

Add Melissa's favourite moves to your workout to prep for the green

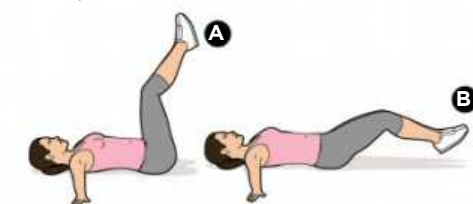
**GLUTE BRIDGE:** Lie on your back with knees bent and heels on a step (A). Raise your hips off the ground so your body forms a straight line from your shoulders to your knees (B). Make sure you rise up fast to really engage your glutes. Pause at the top, then slowly lower and repeat 15 times.



**SIDE PLANKS:** Lie on your right side with your feet stacked, your right forearm on the ground and your left hand on your hip (A). Raise your hips off the floor to lift yourself onto your forearm, so your body is in a straight line (B). Hold for 20 seconds, then repeat on the other side.



**LEG RAISE:** Lie on your back and place your arms out to the sides. Squeeze your abs to raise your legs off of the floor, until at a 90° angle to the ground (A). Hold for a second before slowly lowering your feet towards the floor. Pause before they hit the ground (B) and raise both feet back into the air. Repeat 15 times.



## KIT YOURSELF OUT



From left to right: Lija Score Tournament Polo (£54; [lijastyle.com](http://lijastyle.com)), Footjoy AWD Ladies Golf Shoe (£64; [golfbidder.co.uk](http://golfbidder.co.uk)), Lija Score Classic Straight Skort (£60; [lijastyle.com](http://lijastyle.com)), Nike MAX Transitions Golf Sunglasses (£196; [transitions.com](http://transitions.com))

stop when golfers are in the limelight. 'I usually do 20 minutes of cardiovascular exercise each day I'm at a tournament – but it's a really light session,' says Reid. 'I'll then do a bit of resistance-band work, as well as core and glute activation exercises. These moves help improve my golf swing.' Turns out golfers never rest!

## DO TEAM SPORTS

Golfing is a solo sport, but that doesn't mean you can't be a team player. Reid plays football in her spare time. 'I play for the Loughborough Foxes, who are in the Northern Premiership,' she says. 'I'm going to keep football in my weekly routine.' ■





## JEAN-CLAUDE'S FITNESS FIX

# Focus on... CORE

To get a strong core, you need to do more than just sit-ups

**W**hen we think of our core, most of us think about toned abdominals and a six pack, but there's much more to it than that. In fact, your abdominal muscles make up a relatively small part of your core, as the core includes all the muscles that stabilise your pelvis and spine. Your abdominals do play an important role, but there are many other less obvious muscles that help keep you strong and stable through your entire trunk.

## YOUR CORE MUSCLES

Muscles that are commonly considered part of the core include the rectus abdominis, or six pack muscle; the transversus abdominis, your body's natural weight belt; the multifidus and erector spinae, the muscles around the spine; and the obliques – the muscles at the sides of the trunk. These core muscles, together with other lesser considered, but extremely important larger muscles, such as the psoas and other hip flexors, the glutes and

the hamstrings, all work together to create a base of support, which allows you to move quickly and efficiently and stay injury free.

A strong core is essential if you want to be powerful, improve athletic performance and, of course, stay pain free. The key to this is structural balance, particularly in the muscles around your pelvis. It's very common for people to have tight hip flexors and relatively weak hamstrings and glutes, which affects the posture in your lower back for example. The same happens when your rectus abdominis is over developed (typically through doing lots of sit-ups and crunches), relative to the erector spinae muscles on the lower back, creating an imbalance in your body.

The plank works your lower back at the same time as your front core muscles, unlike sit-ups.



Functional training (mimicking movements you use in everyday life) is a great way to help build your core strength as you're engaging muscles throughout your torso. These muscles have to work together to provide stability and a platform for more dynamic movement. This is why some of the best exercises for strengthening the core are tried and tested bodyweight exercises, such as the Plank and Glute bridge and the functional Suitcase carry move, in the box below.

**Personal trainer Jean-Claude Vacassin owns W10 Performance gym in West London. He has advised athletes, sports brands and film companies, as well as working in nutrition, functional medicine and rehabilitation. Visit [w10performancegym.com](http://w10performancegym.com).**

## THREE TOP EXERCISES FOR A STRONG CORE

### PLANK

Lie on your front with your arms bent and elbows under your shoulders. Actively engaging the muscles of your trunk and legs, push up onto your toes so your body's parallel to the floor. There should be a straight line between your ears, hips and ankles, with no sagging through your lower back. Work up to being able to hold this for two minutes.

### GLUTE BRIDGE

Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Actively engaging the muscles of your abdominals, hamstrings and glutes, push your hips up towards the ceiling. Keep your glutes engaged throughout and don't allow your lower back to arch. Work up to a sixty-second hold, then progress to shoulders elevated (on a bench) and weighted versions.

### SUITCASE CARRY

Grab a dumbbell, kettlebell or other heavy object and hold it in one hand like a suitcase, keeping your shoulders square and upright. Maintaining this posture, walk with the object by your side for 50m. Put the weight down, turn around, pick it up with your other hand and walk back. If you're short on pace, just do multiple lengths. Repeat two to three times.



Protect and support your back by keeping your abs pulled in, your back long and your tailbone towards the floor throughout.

# STAND TALLER, *look slimmer*

This Pilates move promotes better posture, less back pain, more energy and a long, lean look

## SWAN DIVE

### BENEFITS

The Swan dive is a Pilates exercise that works the back, abs, core, glutes, hamstrings and inner thighs. It also promotes proper shoulder movement and lower-back strength, while improving control and coordination throughout the entire core area.

### HOW TO DO IT

- Start lying on your stomach with your fingers linked behind your head.
- Inhale, then lift your torso up off the mat as you lengthen your arms forward by your ears, reaching long from your fingers to your toes.
- Keeping your legs planted to the

floor and neck still, circle your arms around to your sides.

- Exhale, then return your hands to your head and go back to the starting position.
- Do six to 10 reps.







# SWIM TO WIN

It boosts the body and is kind to joints – swimming is a great cross-training sport for runners. But the open water may have the most to offer...



**S**wimming: it's the fall-back sport that runners love to hate. It's what we're left with when our knee, foot, ankle or [insert injured body part here] is too damaged for running. And yet, according to experts, swimming is a boon sport for runners' bodies, increasing lung capacity, enhancing endurance, boosting strength and aiding recovery without putting any high-impact stress on your joints. The trouble, of course, is that swimming can be just a little bit dull. To the runner who loves the great outdoors and a sense of 'oneness' with nature, pacing up and down a chlorine-infested pool, pushing past slower paddlers, offers little allure. But there is an answer – outdoor swimming. 'The outdoors is a great place to relax mentally and recharge your batteries, which is why I think people enjoy being outside for swim training sessions,' explains Slava Feniov, swimming coach at Reebok Sports Club and 3S Swim School (3sswim.co.uk). 'Similar to when you're running, the fresh air and calm surroundings provide a great environment to focus on your fitness goals and performance without the distractions associated with a swimming pool.' And, as water temperatures usually continue to rise throughout the summer, the seas, lakes and lidos have never been more appealing at this time of year. Are you ready to dive in? Here's everything you need to know to get the most out of your watery training sessions.

## 1 SEEK AN EXPERT

One of the biggest pluses swimming has to offer runners is its emphasis on technique. 'Swimming is very much a technique-orientated activity,' explains Andy White, swimming coach at Swimergy (swimergy.com). 'It really makes you think about your form, and that translates well to running because you become more aware of your running technique, too.' In order to maximise the benefits of outdoor swimming, it's essential to perform the moves correctly. The easiest way to do this? Sign up for some training sessions with a swimming coach or club. 'The first and most important thing is to be a competent swimmer in order to stay safe in open water,' agrees Feniov. 'Wild swimming is very different to swimming in a pool – there is no shallow end, which means it can be difficult to find a spot to take a rest, so you must be a confident swimmer.' Many open-water swimming event organisers, such as the Great Swim and Human Race, offer training days – why not sign up to one?

## 2 FIGHT THE FEAR

Open-water swimming confidence doesn't come instantly, and many people are nervous about hitting water when you can't see the bottom. The trick for calming nerves is to stay relaxed by focusing on your breathing rhythm. Breathing bilaterally (on each side: often every third stroke) is a nifty technique. It creates a rhythmic breathing pattern that will make it easier to swim in a straight line, while using muscles in a balanced way. 'Breathing is one of the most important aspects of swimming and a good rhythm is critical for optimum body position in the water [because breathing on both sides leads to a balanced stroke],' explains White. 'Fortunately, having control of your breath also translates nicely to running because getting into a breathing rhythm is critical when running, too.' Result!





## 4 TARGET THE TRAINING

Think swimming is a bit ho-hum? It needn't be. 'Whether you're training to compete in a long-distance marathon or triathlon, there are a huge number of different sets and drills you can use to boost general fitness,' reveals Feniov. Indeed, swimming offers great versatility in that it allows you to strengthen weaker muscles or rest tired areas. When swimming, you can work aerobically, by doing long distances at a moderate pace, or anaerobically, by doing short, sharp sprints – and, in this respect, it's similar to running. You can also target specific muscle groups. Need to work your legs? Grab a float and do some kicking drills. Want to give your lower limbs a rest? Use a pull buoy and focus on doing arms-only work. Try these tricks.



### BOOST LEG POWER

Using a float, perform some kicking-only sets. If you're swimming in the open air, lose the float and do a front crawl set, but keep kicking super-fast to improve the power in your legs.



### INCREASE ARM STRENGTH

Perform sets with a pull buoy between your legs to focus on your arms. You can also perform this exercise outdoors without the pull buoy, but focus on the speed of your arm movement and little or no kick.



### ENHANCE ANKLE MOBILITY

Runners tend to have poor ankle mobility. Swimming strengthens the ligaments and tendons around the ankle. Swim wearing a pair of fins to further increase the range of movement in the ankle area.

## 3 STRENGTHEN YOUR NOGGIN

There are many natural obstacles when you run on the roads or trails – hills, wind, mud and corners. Swimming outside is no different. Whether pacing around buoys and bends or battling against the tide, open-water swimming requires the same mental fortitude that runners need to battle the elements. 'One thing we teach people when we take them out to sea is how to put in hard 100m bursts of fast swimming,' says White. 'This represents the current and the effort required. It's similar to running up a hill because you need to change your stroke – it gets quicker against the tide – just like you change your running technique to conquer hills.' Great for harnessing a few mental skills that will transfer nicely to running fast.

## 5 GET KITTED OUT

They might not be easy to wriggle into, but wetsuits are a useful bit of kit. 'A wetsuit provides extra flotation and protects you from extreme temperatures,' says Feniov. Here are a few more nifty items.

### Aqua Sphere Speed Plus Swimming Cap

(£9; [simplyswim.com](http://simplyswim.com))

'Lock in heat with this super-warm swimming hat that's perfect for an outdoor paddle.'



### Aquaviz OTS Core and Pro Single Vision Inzert

(£70; [aquaviz.com](http://aquaviz.com))

'Make sighting in the open water a lot easier with these prescription goggles.'



### Speedo Monogram Allover Muscleback Swimsuit

(£31; [speedostore.co.uk](http://speedostore.co.uk))

'Wear this popular performance swimsuit under your wetsuit or in the pool.' ■





## RUNNING EXPERT

H&F running coach **Sam Murphy** answers your training questions

**Q** I've heard that drinking too much water can be dangerous. How do I know how much to drink safely on long runs?

**A** Runners were once encouraged to drink as much fluid as possible, but now the advice is simply to drink according to thirst. This stems from research showing that low levels of dehydration are not detrimental to health – or indeed, performance. When Haile Gebrselassie broke the marathon world record in Berlin in 2008, he was reputedly 10 per cent dehydrated at the finish line – and yet levels of as little as two per cent were thought to be bad for you.

At the other end of the spectrum, runners heeding the 'drink, drink, drink' advice have hit problems – there have been a number of casualties and even deaths as a result of hyponatraemia or 'water intoxication' where sodium levels in the blood become too low, causing muscle weakness, confusion, nausea or vomiting and, in advanced stages, brain swelling and loss of consciousness. Slower runners (who are out on the course longer in races such as marathons

or long-distance triathlons) are more at risk of hyponatraemia simply because they have more opportunity to drink. Recent research also found that women are more likely to overdrink than men.

So the key advice is to listen to your body and use common sense. If you drink plenty in the hours before a run, you'll need less fluid than if you wake up dehydrated and set off soon after. If your stomach is sloshing with fluid, you don't need more. The colour and volume of your urine is another good indicator of your hydration status – scant, dark urine indicates underhydration. If, however, you're stopping to pee during long runs, it's highly unlikely you need to drink more.

For a more personalised result, you could do a sweat test. Weigh yourself nude before a run, then run for 60 minutes without taking any fluid on board. Weigh yourself again immediately after. The weight loss in grams reveals your fluid loss in ml. For example, if, in your 60-minute run you lose 600g, that equals 600ml of fluid loss. But you can only apply the results of the test to runs of a similar intensity in similar conditions.

### NEW KIT

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# Gym trainers

WE LOVE



H&F's features writer **Becky Fletcher** tests out the best training shoes for functional fitness, gym and studio workouts



## NIKE FLYKNIT ZOOM AGILITY

£140; [store.nike.com](https://store.nike.com)

'These extremely lightweight shoes allowed great flexibility during a fast-paced, high-impact studio workout, thanks partly to the Nike Zoom cushioning pods on the soles. The fit is snug and almost sock-like, due to

the breathable Flywire knit, but there's still plenty of support, with a memory foam collar that locks in your heel. I loved the look of these, too – they're very stylish and you can choose from lots of colour combos.'

COMFORT ★★★★★ SUPPORT ★★★★★ STYLE ★★★★★

## PUMA IGNITE PWRCOOL SHOES

£85; [uk.puma.com](https://uk.puma.com)



'These felt more supportive during a HIIT session than many of the others on test, but, even though the upper part of the trainer has a minimal design, they lacked the flexibility for some more extreme movements. However, the shoe is very lightweight, comfortable and responsive to regular movement, thanks to the very bouncy IGNITE foam in the soles.'

COMFORT ★★★★★  
SUPPORT ★★★★★  
STYLE ★★★★★

## REEBOK CROSSFIT NANO 5.0

£90; [reebok.co.uk](https://reebok.co.uk)



'I love these shoes – they're incredibly comfortable, have great arch support and are very breathable. The sole is designed to give stability for heavy lifts and there's plenty of cushioning – which I felt as I did my jump squats and lunges. There's even a grip pattern on the soles to help you with rope climbs. Durable shoes (the mesh is infused with Kevlar!) that come in great colours.'

COMFORT ★★★★★  
SUPPORT ★★★★★  
STYLE ★★★★★

## UNDER ARMOUR SPEEDFORM FORTIS

£100; [underarmour.co.uk](https://underarmour.co.uk)



'At a super-light 191g, these boast the perfect blend of flexibility and support, with innovative features such as comfy moulded seamless heel cups, silicone heel grips and adjustable heel lockdown straps. There's 8mm of offset between the front and back of the shoe, and flexy grooves in the forefoot helping you spring forwards – great for the treadmill!'

COMFORT ★★★★★  
SUPPORT ★★★★★  
STYLE ★★★★★

## INOV-8 F-LITE 235

£99.99; [wiggles.co.uk](https://wiggles.co.uk)



'Extremely light and minimalist, these Inov-8s are a great functional fitness-training shoe with some impressive technology. There's a seamless toe bumper for burpees and a very dense, stable heel for lifts, plus rope protection for rope climbs. The shoes were flexible with plenty of grip and are on point style-wise. There's slightly less cushioning in these than other styles I tested, though.'

COMFORT ★★★★★  
SUPPORT ★★★★★  
STYLE ★★★★★

## ASICS GEL-FIT TEMPO 2

£60; [asics.co.uk](https://asics.co.uk)



'These good-value, highly breathable trainers gave flexible, cushioned support and were great all-rounders. Although they felt more minimalist than a lot of the others, there was still plenty of support for side-to-side movement. They also have a removable liner so you can use orthotics with them. The sleek design meant I was reluctant to take them off post workout.'

COMFORT ★★★★★  
SUPPORT ★★★★★  
STYLE ★★★★★

## NEW BALANCE 811

£65; [newbalance.co.uk](https://newbalance.co.uk)



'High-impact workouts were no issue in these. The design, inspired by kinesiology taping methods, provides great support while the cushioning will keep your feet comfortable during everything from weights sessions to a higher-intensity circuits class. As well as being supportive and breathable, these are pretty easy on the purse strings and even easier on the eyes.'

COMFORT ★★★★★  
SUPPORT ★★★★★  
STYLE ★★★★★



# *I've raised the profile of women's boxing'*

Student Marnie Swindells, 20, was the only female at her boxing club, until she volunteered to coach women...

**I** started boxing three years ago, but only competitively since I moved to London to start my degree and have since made it to the national semi-finals. When I first joined my new club (Double Jab Amateur Boxing Club) in Lewisham, I was the only woman. They even ran a free eight-week course to try to get more women involved, but nobody took it up. Someone suggested that a female coach might be the way to ease women into the sport and I was put forward for the role.'

## THE BIG CHANGE

'On top of studying for a degree in history and politics at Goldsmith's, competing in national tournaments and boxing four nights a week, I now volunteer to coach women. Since I started coaching, 30 women turn up every Thursday. They all come from totally different backgrounds – they're not all super-fit and obsessed with working out – they're just normal women trying to get active. I coach everyone from a 26-year-old woman recovering from gastric band surgery to mums wanting to shed weight. I even used my university link to try to get students involved.'

## BREAKING THE STEREOTYPE

'Most of the women don't want to box competitively; they just use boxing as a really good form of fitness – you don't realise how many calories you're burning! Some of the women do love getting in the ring, though. It's an incredible feeling – every woman should try it. I love the #ThisGirlCan campaign, especially the woman boxing in it – it was really good to have a boxer among the other sports such as swimming and running. It's important for girls to see that and feel like they can do it. People stereotype female boxers, but we can be feminine, too. An old coach even thought it was a factor in my ability to box. Thinking women can't or shouldn't box is such an ignorant belief. One of my aims is to break this stereotype. Take this away and it can just be a sport.'

## THE VOLUNTEER FACTOR

'The best thing about volunteering is seeing people's progress. Women come in through the doors and think they can't do it, then they'll come back a week later and they'll be wearing nicer gym clothes because they feel inspired. Their gratitude is great. I've been there, so to be able to pass it on is pretty cool. On top of competing, I want to have even more women walking through the club doors, of all different ages, shapes and heights. Everyone has to start somewhere. We had a guy in the club who was 21 stone and has shed it all to become a healthy weight – he looks amazing. You just have to challenge yourself and see what you're capable of.'

### *Volunteer!*

If you're inspired to try volunteering, head to Join In ([joininuk.org](http://joininuk.org)) – the nation's charity for local sports volunteering – for more information and opportunities.





# WIN!

## A HAMPER OF PAMPERING PRODUCTS AND HEALTHY SNACKS, WORTH £150

Yushoi® Snapea™ Rice Sticks, the healthy new delicious baked snack made using green peas is working with *H&F* to give two lucky readers the chance to win a pamper package, worth £150 each, packed with Bodhi & Birch spa products.

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The company prides itself in sourcing the best ethical, fair-trade products, where possible, ensuring ingredients are free from harmful content, and its buyers examine the ingredients in each product it stocks.

This summer saw the launch of Revital's newly revised and branded website ([revital.co.uk](http://revital.co.uk)), allowing customers to easily find what they need and ask for expert advice online. Revital is offering *H&F* readers 15 per cent off all products.

**TO CLAIM YOUR DISCOUNT,** go to [revital.co.uk](http://revital.co.uk) and enter 'healthandfitness2015' at the checkout. Offer valid until **September 22, 2015.**



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Richardson Hotels is offering *H&F* readers the chance to get 20 per cent off the best available rates for a spa break at either the 4-star Grand Hotel, Torquay, with a prime seafront location on the English Riviera, or the 4-star Metropole Hotel, Padstow, with its new spa – both Richardson Hotels of Distinction.

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SNHS is one of the fastest growing Distance-Learning Schools in this field. Since our inauguration in 1997, our friendly, professional team have trained thousands of people in over 40 different 'natural' health subjects.

For more information, visit: [www.naturalhealthcourses.com/home.htm](http://www.naturalhealthcourses.com/home.htm)

## Courses to suit your lifestyle

This is adult learning, so there are no fixed time limits for completion, no fighting traffic to get to your course, no rushing to classes or working to tight deadlines. In fact, this is the perfect 21st-century solution for busy and pressurised people.

## Choice of subjects to train in

At SNHS, you will receive top class training to practitioner level in the following course subjects:

- Nutrition • Herbalism • Kinesiology • Indian Head Massage • Acupressure
- Allergy Testing • Sports Nutrition • Reflexology • Iridology • Homeopathy
- Flower Remedies • Relaxation Therapy • Aromatherapy • Dream Therapy
- Hypnotherapy • Meridian Psychotherapy • Crystal Healing • Reiki Theory
- Diabetic Risk Assessment • Past Life Therapy • Holistic Pain Management
- Hopi Ear Candling • Indian Face Massage • Hot Stone Therapy
- (NLP) Neuro Linguistic Programming • Stop Smoking • Colour Therapy • CBT
- Holistic Massage Therapy • Holistic Dowsing • Life Coaching • and more

Our school also provides counselling courses in Stress Management, Drug and Alcohol Counselling and Psychotherapy and Counselling. What's more, students may study Anatomy & Physiology and Business and Marketing too.

## Course Descriptions and Fees Page:

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## Special Offers:

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## Accreditation and Practitioner Insurance

Our accreditation is with the International College of Holistic Medicine, (ICHM)

All our courses are insurable through leading insurance providers.

Please visit our accreditation page:

<http://www.naturalhealthcourses.com/accreditation.htm>

## Contact us...

Website: [www.naturalhealthcourses.com/home.htm](http://www.naturalhealthcourses.com/home.htm)

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## STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

Sue Pash began her studies  
with the school in 2004.

*I am a therapist who loves continuing to learn about complementary therapy – and SNHS has proved invaluable for adding to my skills. The courses make great ongoing CPD tool! Since becoming a student in 2004 I have taken several courses and gained the confidence to write the Holistic Dowsing Course for the school. In association with my therapist colleagues, I am now also proud to offer mentoring services for the school's students, offering practical sessions in many of the course subjects, together with business mentoring and seminars in Practice Management. This year my business has expanded again by adding a second Practice room, run in partnership with a fellow graduate of the school.*

For more information, visit:

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Ironwoman  
Charlie Webster



### Why is being fit important to you?

'Mainly because it makes me feel good. It's a mental thing – we talk a lot about the physical benefits but, for me, it's about what goes on in the mind. I don't do it because I want to look good, but because I want to feel better. It's so imperative to make that time for yourself.'

### You've recently completed an Ironman. How was it?

'I felt emotional, every single part of me hurt – it even hurt when I talked! It was one of the most incredible things I've ever done. I couldn't swim two years ago, and only got a bike last year, so it was such a sense of achievement and, hopefully, showed anybody can do anything. I wanted to inspire women, because we're good at endurance races.'

### What was your training like?

'The pool swimming was really hard and I had to get up at 5am to fit the bike sessions in. I love running, so that was easier. I did a bit of strength and conditioning as well. You have to make sure your body is in a good place when you do these events.'

### Was it the toughest challenge you've ever undertaken?

'Last year, I ran to 40 football clubs, running from one to the next – 250 miles in a week. I had to get up each morning and do the same thing, so it was mentally tough and challenged me in a different way. The Ironman was the most intense pain and mental survival mode I've ever been in. It was 15 hours of non-stop pain. I was also doing it for homelessness charity Centrepont ([centrepont.org.uk](http://centrepont.org.uk)) as I was sexually abused as a teenager. I don't want anyone to go through that and it means a lot to me to raise awareness. I'd visited a hostel where half the people there had been abused at home. There were so many emotions running through my head.'

### Challenges aside, how do you usually work out?

'I run a lot and have done since I was younger because it's cheap – you can just

put on your trainers and do 20, 30 or 40 minutes, plus it's great for fitness. I love doing Pilates too – it helps me with my stiff back and hips.'

### How do you unwind with such a hectic lifestyle?

'I find it hard to relax, but I'm working on it. I try breathing exercises to help me unwind. I also love reading and writing, and spending time with my family and boyfriend [actor Allen Leech].'

### What's your career highlight so far?

'It has to be the Olympics. I was there when boxer Nicola Adams won gold, and I was the first person to interview her. It's such a male-dominated sport and she's such an inspiration to show women can box. When I first started in broadcasting, I told my mum I was going to present at the Olympics, so to actually do that *and* on home turf, was amazing.'

### Who is your sporting hero?

'Jessica Ennis! She's from my hometown of Sheffield. She's so down to earth and an incredible mum – what an achievement. How she balances training and being a mother is great. She's not just an inspiration as a sports person, but as a woman.'

### What do you think about women in sport?

'It's changed so much from when I first started. It was amazing to see the attention the FIFA Women's World Cup got, but we need to be careful that certain campaigns don't alienate boys. It's important for girls *and* boys not to see sports as separate. It should be about inspiring young people to do sport and normalising fitness. I led an obesity seminar last week, talking about how one in three primary school children are obese, and if we encourage both genders as a whole to get fit, it's a great thing.'

### Why is charity work so close to your heart?

'I work as an ambassador to Women's Aid ([womensaid.org.uk](http://womensaid.org.uk)) and I'm on the panel of the Ministry of Justice's Victim's Panel, because

I had a few incidents in my own life. I know how it feels to be alone and lack confidence, so if I can help people, it was worth going through what I went through.'

### Any more challenges in the pipeline?

'I'm going to try to do the New York marathon in November. I think my boyfriend would kill me if I did any more big challenges soon, though!'

At the Ironman finish line



## TOP TIP

'Start small when training, by alternating running a little, then walking a little, to ease yourself in'

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